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LIVING ISSUES IN RELIGIOUS THOUGHT

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LIVING ISSUES IN RELIGIOUS THOUGHT

FROM GEORGE FOX TO BERTRAND RUSSELL

BY

H. G. WOOD

Professor of New Testament Literature and Church History at the Selly Oak Colleges, and Director of Studies at Woodbrooke

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PREFACE

THE papers now collected in this volume have appeared in various journals during the past ten years, and I am indebted to the publishers and editors of the *Edinburgh Review*, *The Pilgrim*, *The Contemporary Review*, *The Expositor*, *The Friends' Quarterly Examiner* and *Present-Day Papers*, for permission to republish them in book form. The title "From George Fox to Bertrand Russell" is not chronologically exact, and it is not intended to suggest the starting-point and the goal of a spiritual pilgrimage. It is merely a rough indication of the range of subjects dealt with in these essays. Any unity and any value these essays may possess are bound up with the hope that they may contribute to a revival of Christianity in the true sense of these much-abused words. From this point of view, the essay on the Next Revival of Religion is central. The papers on Quakerism and on Personal Religion and Social Progress indicate those unexhausted truths in the Quaker tradition which, it seems to me, the world especially needs to-day. The strength and weakness of the attempts of Mr. H. G. Wells and Mr. G. Bernard Shaw to furnish a theology or a gospel for the next revival are also examined.

The essay on Liberal Protestantism and Modernist Criticism is intended to suggest that the appeal to the New Testament is neither so difficult nor so fallacious as the Modernist would have us suppose. The next religious revival will rightly insist on the republication of certain elements in primitive Christianity. Other papers are intended to measure the need of a Christian revival by demonstrating the moral and intellectual inadequacy of some alternative positions. And as the writer is a Cambridge man, he has dealt with some of those thinkers who stimulated him both in undergraduate and graduate days. Essays are necessarily eclectic and fragmentary, but partial as these are, they may serve to emphasize aspects of Christian truth which are vital for to-day.

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LIVING ISSUES IN RELIGIOUS THOUGHT

RELIGION AND THE UNKNOWN

I

THERE is in England to-day an attractive group of writers who have made good their positions in the world of scholarship and literature, and who have concerned themselves especially with the study and criticism of religion. It includes such names as Miss Jane Harrison, G. Lowes Dickinson and F. M. Cornford of Cambridge, and Prof. Gilbert Murray of Oxford. They are drawn together by a common interest in the Greek view of life, and at times they seem eager to persuade us that the true line of development for Europe, and indeed for mankind, is to ignore the unfortunate incursion of Christianity and resume the unfinished task of Athenian civilization. All alike are in revolt against Christianity, the spirit and nature of which they are apt to judge by traditional formulæ and by the outlook of its least imaginative and least sympathetic adherents. Unfortunately, the Christian position has usually been obscured for them by evangelical narrowness or ecclesiastical insincerity.

They are keenly alive to the conflicts between science and religion, and feel with Dr. Frazer that the advance

of anthropology is destined to demolish the already tottering fabric of the Christian faith. Their intellectual attitude might be described as Neo-positivist in so far as they would exclude religion from the realm of knowledge. On the other hand, they are not content with bare rationalism, and they seek in the Greek spirit some guidance for the tentative expression of religious aspiration.

The view of religion set forth in the writings of this school rests on two fundamental and allied convictions. They hold that true religion will be essentially undogmatic; they hold further that the true sphere of religion is the Unknown. In other words, they deny that there is or should be any element of objective knowledge in religious faith. In the introduction to *Themis* Miss Harrison offers us a characteristic statement of this position. "The material of religion is essentially the uncharted, the ungrasped—as Herbert Spencer would say, though with a somewhat different connotation, the Unknowable. Further, every religious dogma errs in two ways. First, it is a confident statement about something unknown, and therefore practically always untrustworthy. Secondly, if it were right and based on real knowledge, then this subject-matter would no longer belong to the realm of religion, it would belong to science or philosophy. To win new realms for knowledge out of the Unknown is part of the normal course of human efforts; but to force intellectual dogma upon material which belongs only to the realm of dim aspiration is to steer for a backwater of death." Religious beliefs must, then, be undogmatic. Prof. Gilbert Murray suggests that true religion may be distinguished from superstition by its refusal to claim objective truth for imaginative

representations of the Unknown. Superstition retains, religion rejects, the dogmatic attitude. In an article on "Knowledge and Faith" which appeared in the *Hibbert Journal* in 1908, Mr. Lowes Dickinson developed a similar view. He claimed that our attitude "towards the Unknown, towards all that part of our experience which science has not ordered, towards what may lie behind and be presupposed in what we touch and hear and see," need not be simply negative. "By this principle of growth which I will call imagination, man stretches feelers into the dark, laying hold there of stuff, building mythologies and poems, the palaces of splendid hopes and desires." Imaginative faith creating such mythologies is not antagonistic to knowledge, it is rather the supplement and inspiration of knowledge. "In a state in which there should be perfect knowledge and perfect experience there would be no room for faith, so that in so far as faith works for knowledge it may be said to work for its own destruction. It represents to my mind our first excursions into the Unknown, an airy citadel rising there as a symbol of occupation. Without it I doubt whether knowledge has ever advanced or will advance." The same distrust of dogma as marks the attitude of Miss Harrison and Gilbert Murray reappears in Lowes Dickinson. The proper language of faith as he understands it is "not assertion but suggestion; not logic but passion; not prose but poetry. Poetry has been the raw material of all dogma, and such poetry is neither true nor false; it only becomes false or true or both at once at the moment when it is formulated into a creed." "Poets and musicians, not philosophers and theologians, alone can give to the apprehension of faith an expression that is at once

adequate and elastic." This common distrust of dogma obviously follows from the conception of the sphere of religion which we have outlined. Religion and science, faith and knowledge, are regarded as mutually exclusive spheres. Indeed, Miss Harrison is apparently of opinion that religion can only expect to enjoy a temporary lease of life during the infancy of the latest sciences, psychology and sociology. " When, if ever, psychology and sociology have completely explored the field of human relations, these territories will be like mathematics, withdrawn from the sphere of religion and handed over to science." Mr. Lowes Dickinson pictures faith as holding a dagger to her own breast, ever ready to commit suicide and leave the field free to knowledge. Religion is confined to the ever-narrowing sphere of the Unknown, and any advance in knowledge is apparently prejudicial to it, even if it should establish the guesswork of faith.

Similarly, Prof. Bury, who, though more rationalistic in temper, might be classed with the group of writers we are considering, is of opinion that the success of psychical research would be of no service to religion. " If the existence of such a world of spirits were ever established, it would probably be the greatest blow ever sustained by Christianity ; for the great appeal of this and of some other religions lies in the promise of a future life of which otherwise we should have no knowledge. If existence after death were proved and became a scientific fact like the law of gravitation, a revealed religion might lose its power. For the whole point of a revealed religion is that it is not based on scientific facts. So far as I know, those who are convinced by spiritualistic experiments that they have actual converse with spirits of the dead,

and for whom this converse, however delusive the evidence may be, is a fact proved by experience, cease to feel any interest in religion. They possess knowledge and can dispense with faith." In other words, religious faith lives in the realm into which scientific knowledge has not yet entered. There is no gulf fixed between knowledge and faith. Knowledge constantly grows at faith's expense but faith always has room for expansion so long as knowledge is imperfect.

This whole view of religion is clearly determined by the desire to secure the independence of science. There is to be no tampering with knowledge in the interests of faith. Scientific freedom and honesty are so important that it seems worth while to confine religion to the realm of the Unknown. The same instinct leads Mr. Lowes Dickinson to suppose that any tolerable faith for to-day must sit loose to historic fact. Critical impartiality will be imperilled if men base their beliefs on actual happenings in the past. History must be ruled out of the sphere of religion because it is the subject of scientific inquiry. Such a theory is admirably fitted to safeguard the interests of science, and it confers a further benefit by promoting a tolerant humanism which has been so sadly absent from dogmatic creeds or superstition. If all our beliefs are recognized to be but tentative aspirations, we shall eliminate the divisive force of creeds. If we are all seekers and all equally at sea, we shall develop a sense of kinship, a cosmopolitan feeling of goodwill which Miss Harrison is inclined to identify with the final form of religion.

The maintenance of scientific progress, and the development of the humanitarian sentiment, are considerable recommendations for any point of view.

But it is further claimed for this account of religion that it is borne out by the facts as to the real nature of actual religious beliefs. And it need hardly be added that none of these distinguished writers would be led by incidental advantages to adopt this position if they did not hold it to be true and intellectually defensible. Yet it must be confessed that the dogmatic bias, the passionate claim to be in touch with something objectively real, is so characteristic of religion as to seem essential to it, and the attitude of mind discovered in the position we have sketched falls under the suspicion of being an uncritical reaction against some one-sided developments of religious life and thought —a reaction which is itself one-sided and will prove inadequate as a basis of any religious advance.

II

There is an attractive simplicity in the division of territory between science and religion proposed by the Neo-positivists, and yet it is to be feared that neither the Rationalist nor the Christian will accept the terms of peace that are here offered to them. The Rationalist will not readily be convinced that the advance of knowledge, as he understands it, is dependent on the kind of faith advocated by Mr. Lowes Dickinson. That science can only advance by the exercise of the imagination on the Unknown is perfectly true. But the framing of a scientific hypothesis is one thing ; the building up of morally helpful mythologies, " palaces of splendid hopes and desires," is quite another and radically different thing. Whatever contributions the vision of the poet may have made to the development of natural science have been indirect

and by no means indispensable. It is not the function of religious faith to pioneer for scientific knowledge, and the Rationalist will say that the attitude towards the Unknown which Mr. Lowes Dickinson desires us to adopt is idle day-dreaming, and it would be difficult to resist his contention. On the other hand, when we turn to the believer, to the man who desires to clothe effectively his aspirations, and to develop a mythology which will enable him to imagine a helpful relation to the Universe, it is difficult to see why he should confine his attention to the Unknown. Why should he assume that it is only in the uncharted that he will be able to lay hold of stuff wherewith to house his hopes and desires? And what would be the use of a mythology which ignored all that we actually know of the Universe? Surely the religious man must include the known in his survey; and a faith which cannot accept and interpret all that we know of the world is really worthless. The fact is that the scientist and the man of faith must deal with the same world, must look at the same subject-matter. We cannot divide the realm of human experience into two, and assign that which is clear to science and that which is dim to religion. The poet and the believer must be at least as much a realist as the scientist.

Possibly Mr. Lowes Dickinson would say that the knowledge for which faith pioneers is something more than natural science. But if he does mean that, is it not altogether improbable that religion is concerned only with the Unknown? Faith has been pioneering for long enough, and if it has not yet discovered any supports in reality the outlook appears desperate. Mr. Lowes Dickinson's mythology will fare ill if nothing has been secured by the historical religions of the

past. The prospects of establishing helpful relations with the universe in the future are practically *nil* if history cannot furnish us with any trustworthy experiences, any known facts on which to build. Religion can never be simply an attitude towards the entirely Unknown. If we admit, as we must, that the object of religious faith is only partially known, yet without some element of knowledge faith has no assurance and no stay.

The contention that faith becomes less religious when it passes into knowledge, or is less religious in proportion as it contains knowledge, is surely untenable. Facts do not cease for faith as soon as they are known to be facts. The whole conception of ranges of experience passing out of religion and into science with the advance of intellectual exploration is untrue and discredited. When Miss Harrison speaks incidentally of mathematics being withdrawn from the sphere of religion and handed over to science, she is trying to retain one of the most vulnerable positions of Comte. The specious scheme of three stages of explanation suggested by Comte, theological, metaphysical and positive, broke down at once in the case of mathematics. Mathematics never had a theological stage. When were mathematics withdrawn from religion? The mathematical inquiries of men like Kepler, Newton and Lord Kelvin have been steeped in religion. There is nothing to prevent the fullest development of mathematics being taken up into religious life. Nor is the mathematician less religious in proportion as his studies are more scientific. In the actual experience of great men, the division of territory proposed between science and religion cannot be maintained. They refuse to exclude their knowledge from their religion. Prof.

Bury's appeal to the case of psychical research is no happier than Miss Harrison's appeal to the history of mathematics. Even if it were true that those who were convinced that they held converse with the dead ceased to feel an interest in religion, Prof. Bury as an historian must know the danger of appealing to a short range of experience. He must know that the ultimate reaction of a movement like spiritualism cannot be gauged by its immediate effect. If his acquaintance with the persons concerned were wider, he might become aware that the present influence of psychical research is many sided and it enters into all sorts of combinations with both scepticism and faith. But of course, if it was claimed for Christianity that it established the bare fact of an after life which would not otherwise be known, Prof. Bury is right in suggesting that an alternative proof of a life after death would diminish the value of the Christian claim. But when it is said that life and immortality were brought to light through the Gospel, it is usually supposed that something more than the bare fact of a continued existence was offered to men. The whole point of revealed religion is not, as Prof. Bury urges, that it is not based on scientific facts, but that it attaches a special value to some particular facts which are as scientific as any others, and, in the light of a special experience, claims to add a unique worth to the whole of life. If psychical research should establish the fact of a future life, that life will need to be redeemed from littleness and destruction by a revelation of God, just as manifestly as our present life does. If psychical research should become an exact science yielding positive results, it would not and it could not withdraw the future life from the sphere of religious faith and hope.

The vague use of the term " Unknown " in which these writers indulge is a further source of confusion. It is made to do duty for Herbert Spencer's " Unknowable." Mr. Lowes Dickinson apparently includes in the term both unexamined experience and the presuppositions of all knowledge and experience, though the latter can hardly fall within the realm of science as ordinarily understood. But the agnosticism of Spencer does more real justice to religion than the Neo-positivism we are considering. For Spencer's " Unknowable " recognizes that the ultimate object of religion is beyond the reach of science, as Buckle saw long ago, " no advance of scientific knowledge touches or can ever touch the ultimate sense of mystery in which all existence is involved, the wonder in which philosophy begins." It is true that Spencer was equally mistaken in regarding the object of religion as altogether unknowable, as the Neo-positivists are mistaken in asserting that it is entirely unknown. But at least his agnosticism was sensitive of the fact that religion is to be found in a thick darkness which is not a temporary cloud to be dissipated by the advance of science.

III

A measure of agnosticism is clearly an essential element of true religion. Without a profound sense of the incomprehensibility of God we do not begin to apprehend Him. The religious philosophy most characteristic of Hinduism issued in a negative theology since no positive conceptions could describe the reality ; and the Hebrew prophets who had a much more definite religious experience were yet well aware that God's ways are not as our ways, and that He dwells in light

unapproachable. Modern agnosticism has a religious value in so far as it is a refusal to accept as true of God statements which conflict with the findings of scientific and historical study. It has a deeper religious value still, in so far as it is a protest against a dogmatism whose confidence is at bottom irreligious. To insist on the completeness of our doctrinal definitions is to betray lack of reverence. The Rationalist critics of traditional creeds would have been less justified had these creeds been held with appropriate humility.

The greatest Christian thinkers have always been agnostic rather than dogmatic ; they have always been ready to recognize the point where dogmatism passes into irreverence. They have been among the first to confess the inadequacy of human thought and speech, and so far they will agree with the agnostic that God is unknowable. But loyalty to experience, their own and others, compels them to deny that He is unknown ; compels them also to make use of inadequate terms rather than leave uninterpreted all that gives the highest value to life. St. Augustine adopts this attitude in expounding the doctrine of the Trinity. " When it is asked what are the Three," he says in effect, " Human speech is in difficulties through its great poverty. We say, Three Persons, not because we have found the right word, but because silence is worse." On this matter, James Martineau was in agreement with St. Augustine, for he writes : " But the confession of our ignorance once made, we may proceed to use such poor thought and language as we find least unsuitable to so high a matter. For it is the essence and beginning of religion to feel that all our belief and speech respecting God is untrue, yet infinitely

truer than any non-belief and silence." To such theologians it is superfluous for the Rationalist to demonstrate the untenableness of the defined God-idea ; for they are well aware of the logical difficulties of any idea of God, but then they are also aware that God is not simply an idea.

It is important to recognize how far the vitality and depth of religion are bound up with the inevitable inadequacy of our knowledge of God. If God were not infinitely beyond us, He would not be God. A truly religious faith cannot be narrowly pragmatic. God must be more than a convenient or comforting hypothesis. "The gods," to quote an incidental remark of Aristotle, "are placed in a ridiculous light if they be regarded as referred to us, as means to our ends." "It is intolerable to the religious man to think that his God can be the creature of his own worship, the shadow of his own desire." And on this side the great Puritans were right in bidding men reflect on the sovereignty and majesty of God. "Notwithstanding all our confidence of high attainments, all our notions of God are but childish in respect of His infinite perfection. We lisp and babble, and say we know not what for the most part, in our most accurate, as we think, conceptions and notions of God." And John Owen, who says this, proceeds to point out the reasons. The cardinal reason is this : "We know so little of God because it is God who is thus to be known." Such a sense of God's majesty is necessary to promote true reverence and trust. The Puritan consciousness of the sovereignty of God embodied that religious agnosticism which issues in the fear of God. Perhaps we need to recover a similar emphasis to-day.

It is always dangerous to classify the elements of

religious emotion, to separate reverence and trust, for example, from gratitude and love. But it may serve to bring out the significance of the admittedly partial character of our knowledge of God if we approach it from another side and point out that this transcendence of God enhances immeasurably the value of all that we claim to know of Him. Our appreciation of the grace of God is dependent, so to speak, on our agnosticism. In Whittier's well-known lines,

> I know not where His islands lift
> Their fronded palms in air,
> I only know I cannot drift
> Beyond His love and care,

the agnosticism of the first two lines reinforces the confidence of the last two, or at least renders it more precious. Undoubtedly our ignorance of God's resources leads us to lay further hold on the loving character of His purpose. But it is not simply that where we have so often to say, "I know not," it becomes an unspeakable joy to be able to say, "One thing I know." The necessary imperfection of our knowledge of God and the accompanying sense of God's majesty deepens the mystery of redemption. It is probably true that the Puritan, with his thought of God's transcendence and man's vileness, had a stronger sense than the Quaker of the majesty of God's mercy. This thought is enshrined in such a hymn as Binney's "Eternal Light."

> Eternal Light! Eternal Light!
> How pure the soul must be,
> When, placed within Thy searching sight,
> It shrinks not, but, with calm delight,
> Can live, and look on Thee!

The same thought is expressed by Faber in characteristic fashion when he writes :

> Oh, little heart of mine, shall pain
> Or sorrow make thee moan
> When all this God is all for thee
> The Father all thine own ?

There is in this verse, as often in Faber, an aggravating touch of sentimentalism, but it still embodies the wonder of God's love when viewed in the light of His greatness.

> What is man that Thou art mindful of him,
> Or the son of man that Thou visitest him ?

Furthermore, the fact that God's love passes knowledge is the sole sufficient ground of man's eternal happiness. It is true that the deepest mystics divide as to the nature of our final goal, and that even by the same writer the ultimate ideal is varyingly described. Is the highest religious attainment to be described in terms of rest and pure enjoyment ? Or does it consist in the wages of going on ? Is God's greatest gift to us knowledge of His truth, or a never-ending search after truth ? Paul is bold enough to look forward to knowing even as he is known ; while in Revelation perhaps the highest idea of blessedness is the picture of those who follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth. It may be that there is no real conflict here, and that we are simply struggling with the poverty of our imagination and our language. And in any case it will be agreed that God's riches are inexhaustible and unsearchable, and that those who trust in Him need never fear the disillusionment of an Alexander the Great, who wept when he found no more worlds to conquer.

Finally, it is necessary to insist on the fundamental difference between the agnosticism which is perhaps a permanent element in true religion and the agnosticism which can see no trace of the revelation of God in human history. A God entirely unknown would be incapable of inspiring worship and trust. The God with whom men believe themselves to be in contact is not simply unknown or unknowable, He is rather

> Our Known Unknown, our God revealed to man
> Existent somewhere, somehow, as a whole,
> Here as a whole proportioned to our sense.

LOGIC AND PESSIMISM

However we account for it, the modern mind seems to be oppressed by a growing sense of homelessness. The conviction spreads ever more widely that we are living in an alien and perhaps a hostile world. We are cradled in injustice, and Nature, if not a malignant enemy, is a careless, indifferent foster-mother. The other-worldly note has indeed been extruded from religion. We refuse to sing hymns about the vale of tears, and resent a description of ourselves as strangers and pilgrims in a weary wilderness. But for many the loss of the religious sense of pilgrimage has only intensified the feeling of being strangers in a strange land. They respond readily to Henley's verse about the fell clutch of circumstance, and the bludgeonings of chance. Their ideal picture of mankind is a dauntless figure, still captain of his soul, unyielding, unsubdued, and yet hopeless in a world which neither cares nor knows. Such estrangement from our environment may be the price we pay for civilization. More probably it springs from something defective in that civilization. But it is attributed to scientific progress in particular. Darwinism has rendered us homeless in an inhospitable world.

This pessimistic attitude towards life has found few more impressive exponents in modern literature than the Hon. Bertrand Russell. The volume of essays entitled *Mysticism and Logic* includes a reprint of " A

Free Man's Worship," in which with a moving eloquence Mr. Bertrand Russell seeks to avert the inward defeat likely to result from the scientific view of the world. The world in which our ideals must find a home is painted in the darkest colours. " That Man is the product of causes which had no prevision of the end they were achieving: that his origin, his growth, his hopes and fears, his loves and his beliefs, are but the outcome of accidental collocations of atoms: that no fire, no heroism, no intensity of thought and feeling, can preserve an individual life beyond the grave: that all the labours of all the ages, all the devotion, all the inspiration, all the noonday brightness of human genius, are destined to extinction in the vast death of the solar system, and that the whole temple of Man's achievement must inevitably be buried beneath the débris of a universe in ruins—all these things, if not quite beyond dispute, are yet so nearly certain that no philosophy which rejects them can hope to stand. Only within the scaffolding of these truths, only on the firm foundation of unyielding despair, can the soul's habitation be safely built." [1]

There arises at once the problem of maintaining man's self-respect and ideals. " How in such an alien and inhuman world can so powerless a creature as Man preserve his aspirations untarnished? " [2] In brief, Mr. Bertrand Russell answers, Let us recognize that our aspirations are our own, that they are transient and doomed to disappointment, and let us nevertheless be true to them, at least in imagination. " The world of fate is not good." [3] " When we have realized that Power is largely bad, that Man, with his knowledge of

[1] *Mysticism and Logic*, p. 47.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 48.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 49.

good and evil, is but a helpless atom in a world which has no such knowledge, the choice is again presented to us: shall we worship Force or shall we worship Goodness? Shall God exist and be evil, or shall He be recognized as the creation of our own conscience?" Mr. Russell has no hesitation about the answer. "The worship of Force to which Carlyle and Nietzsche and the creed of militarism have accustomed us, is the result of failure to maintain our own ideals against a hostile universe." [1] "If Power is bad, as it seems to be, let us reject it from our hearts. In this lies Man's true freedom: in determination to worship only the God created by our own love of the good, to respect only the heaven which inspires the insight of our best moments." Renunciation rather than indignation is the right attitude wherewith to face the tyranny of Time and Fate and Death. For such renunciation leaves us free for unfettered contemplation. Armed with renunciation we can build a temple for the worship of our ideals. "In all the multiform facts of the world—in the visual shapes of trees and mountains and clouds, in the events of the life of Man, even in the very omnipotence of Death—the insight of creative idealism can find the reflection of a beauty which its own thoughts first made. In this way mind asserts its subtle mastery over the thoughtless forces of Nature." [2] The freedom thus secured is heroic rather than happy. "Brief and powerless is Man's life: on him and all his race the slow sure doom falls pitiless and dark. Blind to good and evil, reckless of destruction, omnipotent matter rolls on its relentless way: for Man, condemned to-day to lose his dearest, to-morrow himself to pass through the gate of darkness, it remains

[1] *Mysticism and Logic*, p. 50. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 53.

only to cherish, ere yet the blow falls, the lofty thoughts that ennoble his little day: disdaining the coward terrors of the slave of Fate, to worship at the shrine that his own hands have built: undismayed by the empire of chance, to preserve a mind free from the wanton tyranny that rules his outward life: proudly defiant of the irresistible forces that tolerate for a moment his knowledge and his condemnation, to sustain alone, a weary but unyielding Atlas, the world that his own ideals have fashioned despite the trampling march of unconscious power." [1] Such is the vision of encircling gloom revealed to Mr. Russell as he holds aloft the flickering torch of science.

It may be doubted whether the acceptance of this view of life is prompted exclusively by the disinterested love of truth of which alone Mr. Russell himself is conscious. At least it is difficult not to suspect that the bias of temperament supplements, if it does not supply, the trend of evidence. In philosophy as in practical affairs some men habitually discount their hopes and over-estimate their fears. In every eventuality, they want to know the worst and assume that the worst is most likely to be the truth. They imagine that it is always safer to make this assumption. Only on the foundation of despair can the temple of the free man's worship be *safely* built. Only thus can we absolutely assure ourselves against disappointment. Blessed is he that expects nothing. Mr. Russell constantly reminds us that hopes may be dupes, and as constantly forgets that fears may be liars.

In Mr. Russell's own case, there is some evidence that he is the victim of what has been aptly termed astronomical intimidation. The earth for him is a

[1] *Mysticism and Logic*, p. 56.

petty planet,[1] and the insignificance of our world confirms the insignificance of ourselves. Copernicus in destroying geocentrism has altered our estimate of our own importance. " Round this apparent scientific fact [that the earth was the centre of the universe] many human desires rallied : the wish to believe Man important in the scheme of things, the theoretical desire for a comprehensive understanding of the Whole, the hope that the course of Nature might be guided by some sympathy with our wishes. . . . When Copernicus swept away the astronomical basis of this system of thought, it had grown so familiar and had associated itself so intimately with men's aspirations that it survived with scarcely diminished force." [2] This survival perplexes Mr. Russell. It is true enough that Copernicus and Darwin combined have overthrown the simple creed of " the Leather Bottel," in which song the writer, after surveying " the wondrous things that do abound " in the universe, declared " 'Twas for one end, the use of man." But no revolution in astronomy and no revelation of man's origin can finally determine our estimate of our worth. The reason why ethically inspired systems of metaphysics survive the Copernican revolution in astronomy is that they never had an astronomical basis at all. They rallied round the earlier astronomy, they were not based on it nor dependent on it. The desires which found their account in such systems can dispense with the warrant of geocentrism. The size of the earth, and its position in the universe of stars, have little or no bearing on the importance of Man, or on our desire to understand the universe as a whole, or on the hope of a sympathetic bond between Nature and ourselves.

[1] *Mysticism and Logic*, p. 50. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 99.

It is really Mr. Russell who is afraid of affirming the worth of mankind unless he gets some kind of warrant from astronomy.

Cosmic terror, the awe inspired by the interstellar spaces, prompts many to reject the Christian estimate of man's worth to God and to regard as frustrate the hope of being at home in the world. Though Mr. Bertrand Russell seems at times to be clearly influenced by this emotion, another fear warps his judgment more effectively. It seems impossible that the disinterested love of truth should ever itself become a morbid affection, but if this is possible, the dread of failing to achieve strict impartiality would be a natural form of the disease. Just as honour may become over-scrupulous, so scientific honesty may become fastidious. The disinterested love of truth largely consists in a readiness to recognize disagreeable facts. It may easily degenerate into an unwillingness to build on agreeable ones. Mr. Bertrand Russell is afraid to commit himself to the simplest value-judgments, for fear of flattering human self-esteem. He twice in his volume rebukes those philosophers who find an element of progress in evolution. "If human conceit was staggered for a moment by its kinship with the ape, it soon found a way to reassert itself and that way is the 'philosophy' of evolution. A process which led from the amœba to Man appeared to the philosophers to be obviously a progress—though whether the amœba would agree with this opinion is not known." [1] "Organic life, we are told, has developed gradually from the protozoon to the philosopher, and this development, we are assured, is indubitably an advance. Unfortunately, it is the philosopher, not the proto-

[1] *Mysticism and Logic*, p. 23.

zoon, who gives us this assurance, and we can have no security that the impartial outsider would agree with the philosopher's self-complacent assumption." [1] Apparently Mr. Russell intends these pleasantries to be taken seriously. He thinks man's sense of superiority to the rest of the animal creation needs confirmation from the amœba, though the fact that the amœba is incapable of ageeing or disagreeing with man's judgment is well known, and offers sufficient guarantee that any impartial outsider would recognize the philosopher's assumption to be founded in common sense and not on human vanity. Mr. Russell hesitates to make the mildest assertion of human worth, because it gratifies the wish to find ourselves of some importance in the world. Yet he can't help himself. In the essay on "A Free Man's Worship" he writes: "In spite of Death . . . Man is yet free . . . to examine, to criticize, to know and in imagination to create. *To him alone, in the world with which he is acquainted, this freedom belongs:* and in this lies his *superiority* to the resistless forces that control his outward life." [2] Is this assertion of superiority an irrational, self-complacent assumption which we dare not trust until it is countersigned by the protozoon?

This endeavour after absolute impartiality cannot completely succeed. It results not in scientific devotion to truth but in the stifling of reason itself. It imparts a bias to Mr. Russell's philosophy which is the harder to detect because the source of it seems indistinguishable from the cult of pure reason. The presence of this bias confirms one in the impression that the basis of the free man's worship is chosen not because scientific honesty compels the acceptance of the so-called founda-

[1] *Mysticism and Logic*, p. 106. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 48.

tion-truths, but because the free man fears he would not be truly impartial if he were not willing to build on such disconcerting conclusions.

We are the more disposed to suspect some bias behind the view of man and of man's relation to the world of matter, offered in the free man's worship, because this scientific philosophy hardly seems compatible with the severer ideal of such a philosophy, developed in later essays. The firm foundation of unyielding despair is severely shaken, if not completely shattered, by the subsequent developments of Mr. Russell's Realism. In a delightful paper on scientific method in philosophy, Mr. Russell urges that philosophy should attend less to the results of science and more to its method. "Much philosophy inspired by science has gone astray through preoccupation with the results momentarily supposed to have been achieved." [1] The reasons for the failure of such philosophies are admirably stated. To begin with, "the sum-total of what is experienced by mankind is a selection from the sum of what exists." [2] Consequently even if scientific results were based on the whole of human experience, it would be dangerous to assume that they held true of things generally. Secondly, "the most general results of science are the least certain and the most liable to be upset by subsequent research." [3] "The prudent man of science acquires a certain instinct as to the kind of uses which may be made of present scientific beliefs without incurring the danger of complete and utter refutation from the modifications likely to be introduced by subsequent discoveries. Unfortunately the use of

[1] *Mysticism and Logic*, p. 98. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 102.
[3] *Ibid.*

scientific generalizations of a sweeping kind as the basis of philosophy is just that kind of use which an instinct of scientific caution would avoid, since, as a rule, it would only lead to true results if the generalization upon which it is based stood in *no* need of correction." [1] The philosophies which Mr. Russell has in mind are the philosophies of evolution with their optimistic belief in progress. One philosophy to which the description exactly applies is the basis of the free man's worship. The scientific beliefs on which Mr. Russell builds in the earlier essay do not obviously stand in no need of correction, and are by no means guaranteed against the probability of revision. In the "Free Man's Worship" he makes precisely that use of scientific generalizations which an instinct of scientific caution would avoid. In developing this attitude towards life, he was writing, it would seem, neither as a prudent man of science nor as a philosopher.

The philosophy of the earlier essay is obviously unscientific in the ideal sense, in and through the use it makes of scientific generalizations of a sweeping kind. This is not the only respect in which the philosophic attitude commended in the "Free Man's Worship" is itself condemned by the canons laid down in the essay on "Scientific Method." Mr. Russell hopes to revolutionize philosophy by getting rid of preoccupation with the notion of good and evil. Hitherto philosophers have been expected to give grounds for either optimism or pessimism! But Mr. Russell believes that the philosopher who realizes the significance of scientific method will regard the question of optimism and pessimism as outside his scope, "except, possibly, to the extent of maintaining that it is insoluble." [2] Mr. Russell

[1] *Mysticism and Logic*, p. 103. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 99.

returns to this idea of ethical neutrality again and again. "Driven from the particular sciences, the belief that the notions of good and evil must afford a key to the understanding of the world has sought a refuge in philosophy. But even from this last refuge, if philosophy is not to remain a set of pleasing dreams, this belief must be driven forth." [1] "Until we have learnt to think of it in ethically neutral terms, we have not arrived at a scientific attitude in philosophy: and until we have arrived at such an attitude, it is hardly to be hoped that philosophy will achieve any solid results." [2] Mr. Russell applies this criterion to idealisms and evolutionisms, philosophies of a more or less optimistic type. He forgets that such a canon will rule out as unscientific, a philosophy which founds on unyielding despair, which pronounces the world of fact bad, and which passes condemnation on the universe of matter. How can a philosopher who regards the question of optimism or pessimism as outside his scope urge men to base their souls' habitation on the firm foundation of unyielding despair? There is no ethical neutrality about the free man's worship.

Some of the most penetrating and suggestive criticisms on earlier philosophies, contained in Mr. Russell's essays, consist in the exposure of hasty generalization, and in demonstrating by analysis the complexity of apparently simple notions and problems. Thus he takes the problem of space and resolves it into three distinct problems. He questions the traditional use of the term "universe" in philosophy, doubts the very existence of any such thing, and

[1] *Mysticism and Logic*, p. 30.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 44, and cf. pp. 107–9.

suggests that we cannot make any pronouncements about it in any case. He calls Herbert Spencer to account for believing in the persistence of force, as a kind of scientific dogma. The more one studies such admirable essays in analysis as those on the ultimate constituents of matter or on sense-data and physics, the more one regrets that the essayist has not turned his power of analysis on to the ideas employed in his less mature paper. There we read of accidental collocations of atoms, of Power with a big P, of omnipotent Matter, of the irresistible forces of Nature, of Time, Fate and Death, and the more we read, the more we feel that the writer has given us rhetoric rather than analysis, sentiment rather than scientific philosophy. For all the elevation of the style we would gladly have received in exchange a little more accuracy in definition, more thoroughgoing criticism of ideas. In proportion as thoughtful readers are won to his ideal of a scientific philosophy, they will be repelled by the positions underlying the free man's worship. It is strange that Mr. Russell does not see how the reasoning of the earlier essay offends against the essential canons of his later philosophy. Curiously enough, the only change of mind he records in relation to the free man's worship concerns theoretical ethics. He is less convinced than he was of the objectivity of good and evil. Otherwise the general attitude towards life unfolded in the essay still commends itself to him. The fact that the philosophy involved in it is based on the alleged results of science rather than on its method, departs flagrantly from ethical neutrality, and abounds in unanalysed general notions, does not as yet trouble Mr. Russell.

It may, however, be urged that criticisms of this

kind are somewhat formal. They may suggest that Mr. Russell's logic is not as exact as it is reputed to be. They do not prove his pessimism to be substantially incorrect. If you take Mr. Russell *au pied de la lettre*, he seems to suggest that the philosopher is not to form or express ethical judgments at all. What he really means is that the philosopher is not to exercise his moral faculties until his strictly philosophic inquiries are ended. It is a postponement of the ethical question which is really desired. " Ethical considerations can only legitimately appear when the truth has been ascertained: they can and should appear as determining our feeling towards the truth, and our manner of ordering our lives in view of the truth, but not as themselves dictating what the truth is to be." [1] The " Free Man's Worship " is just such an essay in determining our feeling towards the truth when it has been ascertained. It is not strictly metaphysical: it is meta-metaphysical. Clearly Mr. Russell also believes the results of science on which he builds to be sufficiently assured, and the general notions to be analysed adequately, for his immediate purpose. This assumption invites further discussion. Mr. Russell holds that certain beliefs as to the origin and destiny of man have been so nearly proved by science that for the purpose of defining our attitude towards life they may, and indeed must, be accepted as truths. Science has almost, if not quite, proved that man is the product of blind causes: that his origin and growth, his hopes and fears, his loves and his beliefs, are but the outcome of accidental collocations of atoms: and that there is no hope of life beyond the grave. The truths which are here described as almost beyond dispute have, of

[1] *Mysticism and Logic*, p. 7.

course, been hotly disputed since men were capable of reflecting on their experience. It is not exactly manifest that the agelong discussion is coming to an end, much less that it is terminating in the conclusions outlined by Mr. Russell. There is indeed a fashionable trend of opinion in this direction. A reviewer in the *New Statesman* asserts that most thinking people have absorbed from the atmosphere such conclusions as these :—

" The dependence of the mind on the body has been shown to be complete. The body is the soul's expression, its indispensable tool without which it is not. Viewed dispassionately, the life of man is no different, from the aspect of survival, than (*sic*) that of a plant. However lofty be Nature's aims . . . still they are not ours." Conclusions of this type are undoubtedly often taken for granted in our present intellectual atmosphere. That science has established them, or is likely to establish them, is nevertheless open to question. It would be easy to show that the complete dependence of the mind on the body is by no means proved and is not even regarded as probable by many scientific psychologists. For Mr. Russell himself it appears that the question is at least an open one,[1] and yet unless the mind is completely dependent on the body it is difficult to see in what sense man's hopes and fears, loves and beliefs, can be described as the outcome of accidental collocations of atoms. It would likewise be easy to show that the progress of scientific inquiry has not disproved the hope of immortality. But without recourse to lines of scientific inquiry which Mr. Russell apparently ignores, it seems to me that his own account of the present position of science forbids

[1] *Mysticism and Logic*, p. 100.

him to offer these beliefs about man's origin and destiny as foundation-truths.

Mr. Russell, then, believes that a practically isolated system which we may call nature, without consciousness or intelligence or prevision of results, accidentally brought into being creatures endowed with consciousness, with reason, with the knowledge of good and evil. This emergence of consciousness is a purely temporary phenomenon, for consciousness is destined to be blotted out in a cosmic catastrophe. Science has shown that the unconscious has given momentary birth to the conscious, the non-rational has produced the rational, the non-moral the moral, and, in short, the natural has begotten the supernatural. The evidence for this miracle appears to Mr. Russell to be so overwhelming that he thinks only prejudice will reject the fact as incredible. If men argue, as they do, that consciousness, reason, and conscience in man are inexplicable without a spiritual cause, Mr. Russell attributes this to human self-absorption. "Mind, or some aspect of it—thought or will or sentience—has been regarded as the pattern after which the universe is to be conceived, for no better reason, at bottom, than that such a universe would not seem strange, and would give us the cosy feeling that every place is like home." [1] The universe without mind which accidentally and temporarily produces mind does indeed seem strange. As Mr. Russell says, it is "a strange mystery that Nature, omnipotent but blind, in the revolution of her secular hurryings through the abysses of space has brought forth at last a child, subject still to her power, but gifted with sight, with knowledge of good and evil, with the capacity of judging all the works of his un-

[1] *Mysticism and Logic*, p. 44.

thinking Mother." [1] Mr. Russell is right in thinking that such a universe seems strange. But he is wrong in supposing that at bottom we reject such a view of the universe because it makes us uncomfortable. The offence is not so much to our desires as to reason. Such a universe is strange to the verge of irrationality : it is incredible *per se.*

In another paper, Mr. Russell recognizes that the difficulty in accepting this view of the universe is intellectual rather than emotional. Men are prejudiced against the view by a traditional and mistaken notion of cause. It is commonly assumed that " cause and effect must more or less resemble each other." " It is still often thought, for example, that mind could not have grown up in a universe which previously contained nothing mental, and one ground for this belief is that matter is too dissimilar from mind to have been able to cause it. Or, more particularly, what are termed the nobler parts of our nature are supposed to be inexplicable, unless the universe always contained something at least equally noble which could cause them. All such views seem to depend upon assuming some underlying simplified law of causality : for in any legitimate sense of ' cause ' and ' effect ' science seems to show that they are usually very widely dissimilar, the ' cause ' being, in fact, two states of the whole universe, and the ' effect ' some particular event." [2] This criticism of the older notion of cause does not really get to the heart of the difficulty in believing that mind grew up in a world which previously contained nothing mental. The difficulty does not stand or fall with a general maxim about cause and effect resembling one another. It lies in the peculiar distinct-

[1] *Mysticism and Logic*, p. 48. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 189.

ness of mind and matter, which gives rise to popular dualism. In particular sequences in which we trace " cause " and " effect " in the narrower and illegitimate sense of the term, it may well be that science shows cause and effect to be widely dissimilar. But science shows no parallel to the disparity of cause and effect involved in supposing man to be the product of causes which had no prevision of the end they were achieving, or in regarding his hopes and fears, his loves and beliefs, as but the outcome of accidental collocations of atoms. Not only are the nobler parts of our nature supposed to be inexplicable by less rigorous thinkers than Mr. Russell, but they remain, if not inexplicable, entirely unexplained in his philosophy. They are a complete mystery to himself. Though they are the outcome of accidental collocations of atoms, the hopes and fears, loves and beliefs, throw no light on these collocations and must be rigidly excluded from our consideration if we wish to know the true nature of these atoms. It is illogical to insist that we cannot get at the true nature of the cause unless we ignore a considerable part of the effect. Yet this is involved in Mr. Russell's idea of a scientific philosophy. That Nature should give rise to our notion of good and evil, to our hopes and fears, and yet that these notions, hopes and fears should be utterly alien from Nature, constitutes a staggering disjointedness of cause and effect.

It is difficult, and indeed impossible, to explain the gulf between man's emotional and ethical nature and the external world, if that external world be really the cause of his hopes and fears, loves and beliefs. For Mr. Russell denies that this causal relation involves an objectionable determinism. " It is often thought

that if the state of the mind is determinate when the state of the brain is given, and if the material world forms a deterministic system, then mind is subject to matter in some sense in which matter is not 'subject' to mind." (Incidentally, this thought is the foundation-truth of Mr. Russell's pessimism.) "But if the state of the brain is also determinate when the state of the mind is given, it must be exactly as true to regard matter as subject to mind as it would be to regard mind as subject to matter. We could, theoretically, work out the history of mind without ever mentioning matter, and then, at the end, deduce that matter must meanwhile have gone through the corresponding history." [1] If this be so, why then does Mr. Russell insist that in the interests of truth and a strictly scientific philosophy we must give up supposing that the notions of good and evil afford a key to the understanding of the world? What is true theoretically of mind in general will be true of ethics in particular. If the causal relation between atoms and emotions really holds, our understanding of the world ought to afford a key to the understanding of our notions of good and evil, and *vice versa*. Theoretically, it should be a matter of indifference from which point the scientific philosopher starts. The gulf between Nature and our desires and value-judgments is either illusory, or those desires and value-judgments are something more than the outcome of accidental collocations of atoms.

In his foundation-truths as to man's origin, and as to the material basis of his emotional life, Mr. Russell is apparently working with the old idea of cause, the notion he abandons in his later paper. If man is the

[1] *Mysticism and Logic*, p. 200.

product of blind causes, i.e. natural forces, the old notion is obviously assumed. And if the old notion is assumed, then the view that cause and effect must more or less resemble one another is a valid ground for rejecting the propositions in which it is involved. But if we accept the revised notion of causes which invalidates the earlier maxim, then the statements about man's origin and the mainspring of his life become indefensible. Once more as with Hume, critical analysis reduces cause and effect to an observed uniformity of sequence. "Any case of sufficiently frequent sequence will be causal in our present sense: for example, we shall not refuse to say that night is the cause of day." [1] This is bold, and if we understand that the blind forces of Nature produced man endowed with sight in the same way as night causes day, we might come to terms with Mr. Russell at once. To argue, as Mr. Russell does, that there was nothing mental in the universe before the appearance of man is fairly parallel to arguing that since day is the product of powers of darkness we must accept the strange mystery that the sun did not exist before dawn. Mr. Russell argues to non-existence from invisibility. The argument is not valid. But of course the emergence of man in Nature is not a uniformity of sequence which frequently occurs. The facts dealt with do not occur with sufficient frequence to constitute a normal case of cause and effect. These blind causes only had this effect once, though they exist constantly. Now, so far as our observation goes, life is only derived from life, conscious life only from conscious life. This is the observed uniformity of sequence which, however, we must believe was once broken. The production of

[1] *Mysticism and Logic*, p. 193.

mind by not-mind was a unique historical event, not a uniformity of sequence such as is constantly observed and discovered in biology or physics. So that to explain this particular event we must clearly fall back on the broader idea of the cause and effect as two states of the whole universe. When we do this, can we seriously imagine that our particular sciences have given us exhaustive information as to the state of the whole universe antecedent to the birth of man? How does Mr. Russell know that our own world was a practically isolated system, so far as this event was concerned? What right has the scientific philosopher to predicate of the whole universe that at one point in time it contained nothing mental? If we grant, as we obviously must, that man grew up in a natural environment to which he was intellectually superior, what ground have we for asserting either that this natural environment produced him or that there is nothing in the whole universe akin to himself? The probability is that the blind causes produced man in the sense in which Leslie Stephen used to say the public schools produced their famous sons. By "produced" we should understand "failed to suppress." The proposition that mind grew up in a universe which previously contained nothing mental is not only not proved, it is intrinsically improbable and, I should say, incapable of proof. To say that mind grew up in a natural order which apparently contained nothing mental is a bare statement of probable fact. To speak of this natural order as the blind cause of mind is nothing but a crude instance of the fallacy *Post hoc, ergo propter hoc.*

It is a little surprising that Mr. Russell should speak of men's hopes and fears as simply or exclusively the

outcome of accidental collocations of atoms, because he has a good deal to say of the plurality of causes, and of the difficulty of exhausting the many causal series which may be involved in a given event. He quotes in illustration a letter from a correspondent who had been puzzled by various philosophical questions. "After enumerating them he says: 'These questions led me from Bonn to Strassburg, where I found Prof. Simmel.' Now it would be absurd to deny that these questions caused his body to move from Bonn to Strassburg and yet it must be supposed that a set of purely mechanical antecedents could also be found which would account for this transfer of matter from one place to another. Owing to this plurality of causal series antecedent to a given event, the notion of *the* cause becomes indefinite, and the question of independence becomes correspondingly ambiguous."[1] But in asserting that men's hopes and fears, etc., are but the outcome of accidental collocations of atoms, the notion of *the* cause is by no means indefinite. Yet is it proved or probable that we have not in this realm to reckon with a plurality of causal series, and to decline this facile account of *the* cause?

Is there any evidence that the facts disclosed in the natural sciences do not give a complete account of man's origin and growth? The mere fact that we are not at home in our world, that we entertain the dissatisfaction which Mr. Russell so wonderfully interprets, is, I maintain, clear proof that the account of our origin which he accepts is defective and irrational. But apart from this negative questioning, there is the positive evidence of a higher source for the nobler parts of man's nature to be found in the long history of religious

[1] *Mysticism and Logic*, p. 122.

aspiration, poetic insight, and artistic achievement. All this Mr. Russell sets aside, as pure subjectivity. He distrusts it all, because it may prove to be self-deception and self-flattery. At the same time, in the essay on *Mysticism and Logic* he disclaims his right to reject this body of evidence. "Of the reality or unreality of the mystic's world I know nothing. I have no wish to deny it, nor even to declare that the insight which reveals it is not a genuine insight." [1] Yet the attitude towards life developed in the "Free Man's Worship" involves the denial of the reality of the mystic's world and assumes his insight to be spurious. In discussing mysticism Mr. Russell does not so decisively reject intuition as he previously did in the "Free Man's Worship." He devotes a section to reason and intuition, in which he deals with Bergson's attempt to exalt intuition at the expense of reason. He urges with justice that we cannot make intuition independent of reason. "Insight untested and unsupported is an insufficient guarantee of truth, in spite of the fact that much of the most important truth is first suggested by its means." [2] At this stage, Mr. Russell is splendidly judicious and impartial. "The opposition of instinct and reason is mainly illusory. Instinct, intuition or insight is what first leads to the beliefs which subsequent reason confirms or confutes. . . . Reason is a harmonizing, controlling force rather than a creative one. Even in the most purely logical realm, it is insight which first arrives at what is new." [3] But evidently as his discussion proceeds he feels he has conceded too much to intuition. Its place is really in practical affairs, not in the theoretical understanding of the world.

[1] *Mysticism and Logic*, p. 12.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 12.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 13.

" Where instinct is least liable to error is in practical matters as to which right judgment is a help to survival." [1] " Intuition is seen at its best where it is directly useful—for example, in regard to other people's characters and dispositions." [2] Later on, Mr. Russell, arguing against Bergson's claim that " intuition has the power of apprehending the uniqueness and novelty that always belong to each fresh moment," [3] urges that the knowledge of what is unique and new comes through sensation,[4] and that " where the data are new in any remarkable manner, intellect is much more capable of dealing with them than intuition would be." [5] He has apparently forgotten that a page or two previously he has told us that " even in the most purely logical realm it is insight which first arrives at what is new " and that " instinct, intuition or insight is what first leads to the beliefs which subsequent reason confirms or confutes." But in the latter end it seems that intuition, being an aspect of instinct, is only of use in dealing with the practical and the customary, with the older kinds of activity which bring out our kinship with remote generations of animal and semi-human ancestors. Philosophy is an unpractical, highly refined and highly civilized pursuit, whereas civilization is adverse to intuition.[6] So in philosophy, intellect will be at its best, and intuition at its worst. Intuition is dismissed from the place of leadership which Mr. Russell at first assigned to it.

[1] *Mysticism and Logic*, p. 13. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 15. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 16.

[4] Why Mr. Russell uses the word " sensation " here is hard to understand. If he means by " sensation " something purely physical, the assertion he makes is untrue. If he means something more than sense perception, it will be the same as " intellectual sympathy " or " intuition." He dissents from Bergson only in using a poorer word for the same thing.

[5] *Mysticism and Logic*, p. 17. [6] *Ibid.*, p. 18.

The most provocative passage in this discussion of intuition is the following. "Intuition . . . seems on the whole to diminish as civilization increases. It is greater, as a rule, in children than in adults, in the uneducated than in the educated. Probably in dogs it exceeds anything to be found in human beings. But those who see in these facts a recommendation of intuition ought to return to running wild in the woods, dyeing themselves with woad and living on hips and haws." [1] When Mr. Russell is most sarcastic, his reasoning is apt to be least sound. No one who believes in the importance of intuition for our understanding of the world will hesitate to accept this challenge. Has he forgotten Wordsworth's sonnet and the lines:

> Great God! I'd rather be
> A Pagan suckled in a creed outworn,
> So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,
> Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn?

Does Mr. Russell deny that civilization itself is accompanied by loss? In another connection, he tells us, "Not only is artistic achievement not cumulative, but it seems even to depend upon a certain freshness and naïveté of impulse and vision which civilization tends to destroy." [2] Is it not more than likely that this freshness and naïveté of impulse and vision is essential not only to artistic achievement, but also to getting at the truth about the world and our relation to it? May not the loss of the sense of kinship with Nature, which makes us so forlorn, impair also our theoretical understanding of the world? For it is quite possible that the most important truths about the world can only be discovered by the intellectual sympathy, the intuitive

[1] *Mysticism and Logic*, p. 15. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 43.

judgment, which we exercise in our dealings with one another. If, for instance, there is a God, and if He happens to love us, the facts would be read by intuition while they remained obscure to the mathematically trained mind. If civilization and education necessarily impair our powers of intuition, then it might conceivably be better to return to the savage state, woad and all, to regain what we have lost. But civilization and education are not really past improvement. Mr. Russell advocates reforms which seek to restore freshness of impulse and vision, and I imagine he thinks it just possible that such a restoration would serve truth as well as liberty.

Though Mr. Russell's second thoughts about intuition are unjustifiably depreciatory, yet in another section of the same essay on *Mysticism* he makes what is really a great advance on the "Free Man's Worship." In discussing Time, he says, "A truer image of the world, I think, is obtained by picturing things as entering into the stream of time from an external world outside than from a view which regards time as the devouring tyrant of all that is. Both in thought and in feeling, even though time be real, to realize the unimportance of time is the gate of wisdom." [1] The free man, in seeking a basis for the worship of his ideals, is unaware of this truer image. He is oppressed with the thought of time as the devouring tyrant of all that is. He has not found the gate of wisdom.

The pessimism of the "Free Man's Worship" is, then, logically inconsistent with Mr. Russell's ideal of a scientific philosophy, with his views on the notion of cause, and with his attitude towards mysticism. It does not harmonize with the more permanent elements

[1] *Mysticism and Logic*, p. 21.

of his thought. It is the expression of a mood rather than an attempt to see life steadily and see it whole. In so far as this mood is widely and frequently felt to-day, it is due not to necessary inference from scientifically established truth, but to the one-sided development of human life and character in the present phase of civilization. It is due in part also to over-specialization in scientific studies. In the case of Mr. Russell, a further underlying cause may be suspected in a morbid fear of being duped by his hopes.

THE MORAL SCEPTICISM OF TO-DAY

In his *History of Civilization*, Buckle devoted a provocative chapter to the thesis that the main factor in progress is intellectual rather than moral. He minimized the part played by moral motives, on the ground that the great truths of morality have been clearly discerned and have remained unchanged for long enough. "There is unquestionably nothing to be found in the world which has undergone so little change as those great dogmas of which moral systems are composed. To do good to others: to sacrifice for their benefit your own wishes; to love your neighbour as yourself; to forgive your enemies; to restrain your passions; to honour your parents; to respect those who are set over you: these and a few others are the sole essentials of morals, but they have been known for thousands of years, and not one jot or tittle has been added to them by all the sermons, homilies and textbooks which moralists and theologians have been able to produce." [1] The inadequacy of this observation for Buckle's own purpose is obvious enough. He ignores the fact that sermons and homilies if they have not enlarged the moral code have often obscured it. The recognition accorded to the great principles of ethics has been far from constant. These moral truths may have been known for thousands of years, but have they always been practised with equal zeal? If

[1] *History of Civilization*, I. p. 137.

the general principles have for centuries been accepted, has there been no growth of understanding as to particular applications? As an account of morals, this paragraph is singularly incomplete. But to-day it would be challenged, where Christians would most sympathize with it. Buckle assumed that there were ethical principles of absolute validity, and that among such principles, these commandments of love would stand unchallenged. In this he was representative of his age. Among the mid-Victorian critics of Christianity, the soundness of Christian ethics seemed as obvious as the unsoundness of Christian doctrine. The moral principles of Christianity were beyond dispute, and indeed commonplace. But now we have changed all that. Now the Christian ethic is the subject of debate, and men call in question the very existence of a moral law. Are there any ethical principles of absolute validity? Are not all moral judgments matters of taste? Men do not merely doubt the reasonableness of Christian ethic. They despair of giving a reason for any ethical faith whatever.

It would be easy to multiply examples of this tendency. Two recent illustrations may suffice. The first is from a review in the Saturday *Westminster Gazette* for January 18, 1920. The book under review was Mr. James Beck's pamphlet, *The Reckoning*. Mr. Beck had apparently appealed to a moral law as binding on nations. The reviewer comments: "As to Mr. Beck's other point, it would, of course, be possible to argue at far greater length than his pamphlet, whether or not the principles of ethics are absolute. *The best modern opinion would probably maintain they are not.*" It would be interesting to know what the writer meant by the best modern

opinion, but his judgment is significant. The other is a more extended passage from a review in the *Nation* in December 1919. "All opinions on ethical questions are inspired by emotion or passion, whatever camouflage of reason may be used to conceal their source. Reason alone cannot decide what is good or bad in any fundamental sense, though it can, of course, decide subsidiary questions when the main ends of life have been agreed upon. The passions that inspire Nietzsche's philosophy are different from those that inspire the Sermon on the Mount: those who share the one set of passions will agree with the one, while those who share the other will agree with the other. To state the issue in terms of objective morals is merely an attempt to give legislative authority to our own tastes. . . . It is perhaps better to be frank, to let one's desires appear and appeal for support to those who share them. The attempt to prove things not susceptible of proof can only lead to shoddy thought and the substitution of authority for the free play of reason and creative desire." Here, then, ethics become purely subjective, the reflex of emotion and desire.

The change in outlook is largely due to the doctrine of evolution. Darwinism has reacted upon ethics mainly in two ways, and though the two tendencies of thought seem inconsistent with one another, the same writer will often exhibit both and appeal to both to enforce a moral scepticism. The first is the familiar contrast between altruistic ethics and the principles embodied in the struggle for existence. Nature, according to Tennyson, shrieks against the moral code which Buckle assumed to be not only stable but stationary. Huxley regarded our social ideals and organization as a kind of defiance of cosmic process.

Man pursues ethical aims which Nature does not endorse. It was a simple conclusion that our ideals are our own, that they lack all external support. The moral is the unnatural, a little human side-show in a universe that cares for none of these things. The second line of thought finds a place for altruistic morals within the cosmic struggle. Henry Drummond asserted the value of mother-love as a factor in the struggle for existence. Kropotkin emphasized the part played by the virtues of co-operation in the same conflict. So it appeared that evolution found a place for the other-regarding virtues. Many Christians thought the edge of the Darwinistic criticism of the Sermon on the Mount had been turned by these and similar concessions. But the recognition thus given to mother-love and neighbourliness is, after all, a Pyrrhic victory. For these are not absolute virtues. They are still subordinate to the instinct of self-preservation. They are good not in themselves, but just in so far as they help the individual or the community to survive. From this point of view, all moral laws and judgments become relative. To assert yourself or to deny yourself, both are right or wrong according to the particular requirements of the struggle for existence. We must return later to the question whether moral judgments can thus be traced to the necessities of evolution, but in the meantime let us note that evolution is held to prove first that our ethical judgments and ideals are unnatural and so merely subjective, merely our own ; and second, that they are entirely natural, the outcome of the struggle for existence, and so purely relative. In either case, we are landed in moral scepticism, and thinkers like Huxley travelled indifferently to this goal by either route.

Perhaps the most distinguished modern exponent of moral scepticism is the Hon. Bertrand Russell. He began apparently with a vivid apprehension of the indifference or antagonism of nature to our human ideas of good. He did not at once regard ethical notions as subjective, but in the Preface to *Mysticism and Logic* he tells us that he feels less convinced than he did of the objectivity of good and evil. In this volume he endorses the view that such notions arise out of the struggle of human communities for existence and power. They are part of purely human history, and throw no light on the nature of outside reality. They are the outcome of deep-seated instincts and fluctuating temporary desires. A lengthy passage from *Mysticism and Logic* (pp. 107–9) will put his main position clearly enough. "Human ethical notions . . . are essentially anthropocentric, and involve when used in metaphysics an attempt, however veiled, to legislate for the universe on the basis of the present desires of men. In this way they interfere with that receptivity to fact which is the essence of the scientific attitude towards the world. To regard ethical notions as a key to the understanding of the world is essentially pre-Copernican. It is to make man, with the hopes and ideals which he happens to have at the present moment, the centre of the universe and the interpreter of its supposed aims and purposes. Ethical metaphysics is fundamentally an attempt, however disguised, to give legislative force to our own wishes. This may, of course, be questioned, but I think it is confirmed by a consideration of the way in which ethical notions arise. Ethics is essentially a product of the gregarious instinct, i.e. of the instinct to co-operate with those who are to form our own group

against those who belong to other groups. Those who belong to our own group are good ; those who belong to hostile groups are wicked. The ends which are pursued by our own group are desirable ends, the ends pursued by hostile groups are nefarious. The subjectivity of this situation is not apparent to the gregarious animal, which feels that the general principles of justice are on the side of its own herd. When the animal has arrived at the dignity of metaphysics, it invents ethics as the embodiment of its belief in the justice of its own herd. . . . But it may be said that this account of ethics takes no account of such truly ethical notions as that of self-sacrifice. This, however, would be a mistake. The success of gregarious animals in the struggle for existence depends upon co-operation within the herd, and co-operation requires sacrifice to some extent of what would otherwise be the interest of the individual. Hence arises a conflict of desires and instincts, since both self-preservation and the preservation of the herd are biological ends to the individual. Ethics is in origin the art of recommending to others the sacrifices required for co-operation with oneself. Hence, by reflection, it comes, through the operation of social justice, to recommend sacrifices by oneself, but all ethics, however refined, remains more or less subjective."

In this paragraph Mr. Russell accepts an evolutionary theory of morals. Ethical notions are formulated and enforced by society for biological ends. They are therefore temporary and varying weapons, as liable to revision as the weapons of our carnal warfare. The paragraph is curious because it is glaringly inconsistent, and exposes the theory it expounds. For,

naïvely enough, Mr. Russell informs us that the gregarious animal identifies the interests of its own herd with the general principles of justice. That is to say, the general principles exist independently of this morality of herd-instinct, and consequently cannot be traced to it or explained by it. Again, Mr. Russell is conscious that the ethical notions his theory explains are not exactly true ethical notions. The passage to the latter is secured *through the operation of social justice*, a principle which he does not attempt to derive and cannot derive from the gregarious instinct. It belongs in the terms of his own social philosophy, not to instinct, but to spirit. The gulf between the promptings of gregarious instinct and true ethical notions is manifest and unbridged. Moreover, if ethics were simply the outcome of our present desires and wishes, how is it we are able to distinguish between the good and the desired or desirable? Unless ethics is distinct in nature and origin from our instinctive desires, the very camouflage of emotion or passion by reason would be impossible. To camouflage is to make a thing look like something other than itself. If ethics were a by-form of instinct or emotion or passion, it would be an ineffective camouflage. Mr. Russell confuses the tendency of passion or instinct to warp and colour our ethical notions with the power of originating those notions. But thoughts which are fathered by our wishes take on an ethical form precisely because the ethical form is not originated by the wishes concerned. There is no evidence advanced to show that the gregarious animal, having become a metaphysician, either did invent or could have invented ethics. And if the invention only followed when he became a metaphysician, it is clear that ethics is not the

product of mere instinct. The assertion that ethics, however refined, is still more or less subjective, gives away Mr. Russell's whole case. If it is not completely subjective, what is the other element, which presumably is different from the subjective in character and origin and may be the essential thing in ethics? That men's particular moral judgments are constantly coloured by instinct and passion is generally admitted. That truly ethical notions are therefore the outcome of passion or instinct is obviously untrue.

The identification of ethical notions with present human desires is equally indefensible. Apart from the fact already mentioned that we distinguish constantly between what is good and what is desired, and know quite well that the good if always desirable is not always desired, and the things we desire are not always good, this insistence that ethical notions are human and temporary demands, ignores the element of permanence which Buckle no doubt exaggerated but rightly asserted, and denies the reality of moral progress. It overlooks the way in which human desires have been cleansed by ethical demands. It discounts the element of submission in the moral life. In other words, the essentials of ethics are lost sight of in such an identification. As a result Mr. Russell is again reduced to self-contradiction. Thus he writes: "A philosophy which does not seek to impose upon the world its own conceptions of good and evil is not only more likely to achieve truth but is *also the outcome of a higher ethical standpoint* than one which is perpetually appraising the universe and seeking to find in it an embodiment of present ideals." [1] It appears, then, that ethical philosophies are essentially

[1] *Mysticism and Logic*, p. 31.

" the tyrannous imposition on the world of our human and temporary demands." At the same time, a higher ethical philosophy refuses to do anything of the kind. By what standard is this judged to be higher ethically, if ethics is just the reflex of our emotions, the embodiment of the hopes and ideals which we happen to have at the present moment? The essence of ethics is to insist on having our own way. There is, however, a super-ethics, a still more ethical ethics, which resolutely represses our desires. How can there be an ethical standpoint higher than the essence of ethics? It is plain that Mr. Russell has not thought out the essence of ethics.

Since Mr. Russell is right about the higher ethical standpoint, he is wrong in his notion of what is essential in ethics. He starts out with a distinction between the scientific attitude and the moral, which he realizes with a start is a false distinction. This is worth a little more attention. Those who contrast intellectual and moral, science and ethics, constantly forget that truth is an absolute good and love of truth a virtue. Mr. Buckle's thesis contrasting the moral and intellectual factors in progress to the great advantage of the latter is vitiated by the fact that the intellectual factor involves a moral element. One of the trifling things which Mr. Buckle omits in enumerating the moral commonplaces is love of truth. Consequently when he goes on to argue that Inquisitors and Persecutors generally have been morally blameless, he is unaware that he is employing a very limited moral standard. Not merely intellectually, but morally they were defective. There is no science apart from a high morality. Huxley is very emphatic about this Science, he tells us, " learns in her heart of hearts the

lesson that the foundation of morality is to have done once and for all with lying: to give up pretending to believe that for which there is no evidence, and repeating unintelligible propositions about things beyond the possibilities of knowledge." This foundation-morality science learns from nature. "The safety of morality lies . . . in a real and living belief in that fixed order of nature which sends social disorganization upon the track of immorality as surely as it sends physical disease after physical trespasses." It is true that in his fine contempt for logical consistency Huxley later on assures us that the governing principle of the course of nature is intellectual and not moral: "it is a materialized logical process accompanied by pleasures and pains, the incidence of which in the majority of cases has not the slightest reference to moral desert." Nature apparently both guarantees and denies the foundation of morality. But at least Huxley recognized that science itself depends on that moral foundation. Mr. Russell, as I say, remembers this with a start when he claims that a strictly scientific philosophy is higher ethically than an ethical philosophy so-called, because the scientific philosophy is inspired by a greater devotion to truth. Is he prepared to explain this higher ethic as he has explained other ethical notions? If ethics is essentially the product of the gregarious instinct, what of the morality of science? Does that spring from the same source? Will he go on to contend that the valuation of truth as an absolute good and the ethical notion of the pursuit of truth as a duty are merely the camouflage which reason gives to the instinct of curiosity? Is truth only good as and when it is desired? Is it more of a good when men seek it earnestly and less of

a good when their interest flags? When we assert that men ought to seek truth at all costs, are we merely giving legislative authority to our own tastes? Is the desire for truth a human and temporary demand? Are we obliged to serve truth only when we feel in the mood for it?

If Mr. Russell would answer these questions in the affirmative, as his notion of ethics would seem to require him to do, he is at least clear that in yielding to the instinct which looks for truth we have reached something objective. He does not believe that truth is merely what we want, just because we want it, though he is persuaded of goodness in general that it is merely what we happen to desire at the moment. Good things are the things we instinctively and temporarily like. Can such a view be seriously maintained? Is the instinct of curiosity the only instinct likely to find objective satisfaction and bring us into touch with objective reality? Are other noble instincts of human nature which can only find satisfaction in that which is infinite and eternal destined to disappointment? There is no ground in reason or experience for supposing that the separation of truth from other ultimate goods is at all possible. Scepticism in morals must inevitably issue in scepticism as to knowledge. Are morals rooted in the life of instinct? So is science. Have our powers of moral judgment been shaped and developed by the struggle for existence? So has the intellect, as Bergson rightly contends. Do our desires warp our notions of what is right? So do they colour our notions of what is true. If Mr. Russell is right in declaring goodness to be nothing but the objects of our present desires, how can he resist the crude Pragmatist who says truth is

nothing but that which we happen at the moment to want? There is no consideration which Mr. Russell advances against the objectivity of good and evil which cannot be advanced with equal force against the objectivity of truth and error. His whole social philosophy cries out for a faith which he is afraid to affirm. Take this noble passage from the close of the *Principles of Social Reconstruction*: "The world has need of a philosophy or a religion which will promote life. But in order to promote life it is necessary to value something other than mere life. Life devoted only to life is animal, without any real human value, incapable of preserving men permanently from weariness and the feeling that all is vanity." [What then becomes of the contention that ethical notions are essentially related to biological ends?] "If life is to be fully human it must serve some end which seems in some sense outside human life, some end which is impersonal and above mankind, such as God or truth or beauty." [What then becomes of the contention that all human ethical notions are essentially anthropocentric and never liberate us from the parochial, the conditioned, and the taint of self?] "Those who best promote life do not have life for their purpose. They aim rather at what seems like a gradual incarnation, a bringing into our human existence of something eternal, something that appears to imagination to live in a heaven remote from strife and failure and the devouring jaws of Time. Contact with this eternal world—even if it be only a world of our imagining—brings a strength and a fundamental peace which cannot be wholly destroyed by the struggles and apparent failures of our temporal life." To me this is a pathetic passage. If the end only *seems* to be in

some sense outside human life, if it only *seems* to be eternal and is not really so, the peace we seek is a false peace, and the strength we need will fail us. A world of our imagining is not and cannot be an eternal world. Mr. Russell can only get the fulfilment of his moral requirement by deceiving himself and tampering with truth. And yet it is not genuine science which compels him to build his moral life on illusion. His moral scepticism is really due to his unwillingness to study the facts of our ethical experience scientifically. He prefers hastily to determine the essence of ethics through immature systems of sociology and psychology which are not yet thoroughly imbued with scientific reverence for fact.

The study of the intellectual chaos which surrounds Mr. Russell's judgments on ethical questions is worth while, because it serves to bring out the disastrous reaction of moral scepticism on the life of the mind. It is none the less grievous that so distinguished a thinker as Mr. Russell should countenance this position. His own positive influence, which might help much in moral reconstruction, will be discounted by his declaring beforehand that his principles are incapable of reasoned defence, and are merely the personal preferences which he chances to hold at the moment. Men will disregard his personal preferences, but note that there is no valid reason why they should not indulge their own. His authority will be cited to justify the view that in the problems that confront us there are no common moral standards to which we can appeal and by which we may be guided. To seek a unity of moral judgment is a hopeless quest. Just when we need most a sure word of prophecy, some moral guidance to lift us beyond our passions and emotions, men are least con-

vinced that any such guidance is possible. It is a misfortune for the world that our moral pulse beats so feebly.

There is, however, one advantage in the development of moral scepticism. It was not altogether a good thing that Christian standards were taken for granted. It is just as well that they should be challenged. We are likely to take our ethical standards more seriously if they are not beyond question.

The moral scepticism of to-day is in part a reaction from the moral confidence of the Victorians. It is the fashion to dwell now on the priggishness of the great figures of the Victorian age. We criticize their moral faith on the strength of their theory of knowledge. We are sceptics morally because "knowledge is of things we see." Yet in the Victorian tradition the element we discard, the element of faith in moral law, was sound ; the element we retain, the limited and inadequate conception of knowledge enshrined in Tennyson's famous line, was and is fallacious. The critics of the Victorians are smaller men. We abandon what is great and retain what is little in that age. Our supreme need is the regeneration of moral faith—the faith to which they were so magnificently loyal.

A DISCIPLE OF SPINOZA: A STUDY IN THE POLITICS OF POWER

THE most important lesson of the war is the discrediting of those who subordinate right to might in international relations. The fact that the war took place should suffice to shatter the prestige of the statesmanship which regards all questions of foreign policy as problems of security and power. The wisdom of the world which issues in such a catastrophe must surely now be recognized by men to be folly. The part played by moral factors in the decision of the war would also confirm the same lesson. In the closing stages of the war, the negative exposure of the brutality of power-politics at Brest-Litovsk, and the positive appeal of the principles of justice laid down by President Wilson and endorsed by the Allied statesmen, sapped the morale of the German people and sustained the spirit of the Allies at the most critical period of hostilities. The war itself and the Allied victory alike point to the peril of exalting power and ignoring righteousness. Yet this obvious lesson is not being taken to heart. "Real-Politik" is less articulate than it was, but not less active. The Allied statesmen have trampled on the principles to which they owed their triumph, and the old fallacies of power, while disowned in word, are honoured in deed. The student of politics must still keep the principles of Bismarck and Macchiavelli in view.

The folly and wickedness of these principles still call for reiterated exposure.

A typical English presentation of this so-called political realism may be found in Mr. W. M. Fullerton's *Problems of Power,* which has now reached a third edition. Mr. Fullerton wisely refrains from any reference to Macchiavelli, and commends his philosophy to the British public by appealing to Spinoza. Now Spinoza is a more respectable and less notorious political thinker than Macchiavelli. His claims on the respect of believers in "Real-Politik" are very considerable. The *Tractatus Politicus* begins by giving moral philosophers and theologians their *congé,* and by granting a monopoly of wisdom to practical statesmen. Spinoza sides with the latter in resolving to consider men as they are, not as we should like them to be. He holds, with those who have experience in government, that there will be vices so long as there are men, and that the natural passions of men will be always and everywhere the same. The human heart does not change. It is useless to lament or criticize. In politics we must accept the facts and work with them. Spinoza tells us that he has nothing new to offer in political theory. He proposes to justify on grounds of reason or deduce from the constitution of human nature those principles which agree best with experience. He conducts his political studies with the same freedom from moral bias with which he pursues his mathematical inquiries. He determines neither to ridicule nor to lament nor to abhor, but merely to understand human actions. Human passions—love, hate, anger, envy, ambition, pity, and the rest—he regards not as defects but as attributes of human nature, belonging to it much in

the same way as heat and cold, storm and thunder, belong to the atmosphere. We can derive the same intellectual satisfaction from contemplating the waywardness of men in politics as from observing and discussing the vagaries of the weather.

In virtue of this objective standpoint, Spinoza is the natural patron of *real*-politicians. Other positions to which he commits himself enhance the attractions of his philosophy. He was essentially conservative. He did not think it possible that any fresh and useful discovery should be made in practical politics. Human nature remains what it always was, and we shall not improve on the expedients of the past. Spinoza also assumed that men are by nature enemies, and that the law of the jungle governs the relations of States. In consequence, agreements between States are only binding so long as the considerations of fear or hope on which they rest are operative. The State that suffers from breach of contract should blame, not its neighbour's want of faith, but its own lack of intelligence. Here again we have that suppression of the moral judgment which is supposed to constitute politics a strict science, just as the elimination of the personal equation is essential to the scientific study of nature.

This is not the whole of Spinoza's political philosophy, but it is the aspect of his thought on which the morally lethargic will readily seize. It is, therefore, to those who know the *Tractatus Politicus*, a doubtful recommendation when Mr. Fullerton, sometime Paris correspondent to *The Times*, declares himself a disciple of Spinoza, and prefixes to his book the passage in which the philosopher declines to appraise ethically the emotions which determine

men's political action. The fundamental principles to which Mr. Fullerton clings are very simple. With Spinoza, he believes that States are always pursuing a spoils-policy. "The prehistoric spoils-policy of the cave-dweller was realized by woodland craft, by bludgeon or by swift-speeding flint. The same object, the same principle, govern collective human nature to-day." As it was in the beginning, is now. The Powers of Europe form "an international band of land-grabbers, whose principle of action is reciprocal vigilance during their freebooting raids, lest anyone obtain a little more soil than his neighbour." The procedure may be dignified by calling it the principle of neighbourhood rights, which may be defined as "the right which a Power assumes to annex or administer the States or Dependencies of a neighbour unable to defend itself or to establish justice within its borders." If this right sounds dubious in morals, it evades criticism by donning the cloak of scientific necessity. Its strictly scientific and so non-moral character is demonstrated by regarding it as the sociological equivalent of the physical law of capillary attraction. In following the application of this principle, we are considering "the working of *this positive and scientific basis of modern international politics.*"

Having thus persuaded himself that politics for all time are subject to the law of the jungle, Mr. Fullerton draws the inevitable corollary and concerns himself with the one thing needful, the preservation of nationality. To him, as to Spinoza and Treitschke, the State is power and its first duty is security. For getting the scientific apathy to which he is pledged Mr. Fullerton waxes sentimental over national honour and tradition. He wants France to be France, England

to be England. He cannot dispassionately observe the forces which menace "those sentimental, hereditary, beautifully persistent impulses and prejudices which shape a nation's soul as such a soul has been created by the interplay of historical accidents and geographical determinism." Almost the only positive principle by which Mr. Fullerton is guided seems to be an indiscriminate patriotism. There is, indeed, something more—his profound belief in the binding power of "interest." He follows Spinoza in maintaining that States only enter into agreements, and keep them, in virtue of a clear common interest. All existing written agreements between nations are worthless. "The only treaties that stand a chance of long life are those unwritten agreements which are based on common interests." The term "interests" is ambiguous, but it is best interpreted in the well-known sense of real interests, i.e. tangible commercial advantages. These, and nothing else, unite nations. It is true that this commercial cement is neither very strong nor very reliable, yet the least grain of it, apparently, undoes every other kind of bond, however ancient. In accord with this scientific principle, Mr. Fullerton is convinced that, if France had carried out the terms of her commercial understanding with Germany in Morocco in 1909, the entente between ourselves and France would have been destroyed, France herself would have lost her soul and become the political satellite of Germany. These dreadful consequences would necessarily have ensued from the elimination of a little economic friction between the two countries, and the co-operation of their capitalists in some industrial and commercial ventures. So irresistible is the bond of commercial interests! Similarly, a

reciprocity-treaty between Canada and the United States would have involved the end of the British Empire and the downfall of England. If Canada had agreed to trade with the United States on better and more reasonable terms than before, all the beautifully persistent impulses and prejudices which unite her soul to the soul of Great Britain would have been undermined. This common commercial interest once established, the absorption of Canada into the United States would only have been a question of time, and every link with Great Britain would have been snapped asunder. The Liberal Government did positively nothing at this amazing Imperial crisis. The danger was only averted, apparently, by an impassioned telegram from Mr Rudyard Kipling, calling upon Canada to save her soul by voting for Sir R. Borden. But the Government thought it unwise, and even unnecessary, to intervene. Mr. Fullerton can only conclude that either they did not wish to save the Empire or else despaired of saving it. It does not occur to Mr. Fullerton that anything beyond a common commercial interest can keep the British Commonwealth together. He is confident that men do live by bread alone, and he is inexpressibly shocked when President Woodrow Wilson says bluntly, "Interest does not tie nations together." Mr. Fullerton considers this plain and truthful utterance "a hasty and confused thought," because he has not the least idea of what really unites the British Commonwealth and makes it worth preserving.

Here, then, is Spinozism as Mr. Fullerton understands it. States are natural enemies; States always have been and always will be on the make; States only unite with one another temporarily, if and when

they are on the make together. How far does this positive and scientific basis really explain modern international politics, or suffice to guide statesmen and peoples in dealing with the present situation? It goes without saying that Mr. Fullerton is a shrewd observer and well informed. No one can read his survey of European politics from Sadowa to Kirk Kilisse without learning much that is valuable. Nor can the worth of the book as a mine of information and criticism be dissociated altogether from its underlying philosophy. So many people, so many influential people, in every country share Mr. Fullerton's faith in his supposed science, that it really does hold the key to much in the life and conduct of nations. But in many directions Mr. Fullerton raises doubts as to the adequacy of this scientific outfit. At the long last, his philosophy is worthless and his practical conclusions are utterly mischievous.

George Meredith once drew a useful distinction between the philosophy which embraces the whole reality of human nature and the sham realism which, in contrast with the rose-pink of sentimental idealism, insists on seeing nothing but dirty drab. That Spinoza simplified and so falsified his problem by ignoring the ethical element is a patent defect in his treatment of politics. After all, the ethical philosophers, and even the theologians, are also God's creatures, and stand for some strange factor in human nature which the true realist will not deride but seek to understand. We cannot properly consider men as they are without bearing in mind that they want to be other than they are. "So well do we know ourselves that we one and all determine to know a purer." Ethical ideals cannot be eliminated from our thinking on

political problems without a betrayal of science as well as a dereliction of duty.

This intrusion of the moral factor is always resented by the *real*-politician, whether he be a foreign correspondent exercising an occult influence on public opinion, or whether he hold office and be directly responsible for national policy. Scientific thought on political issues, he assures us, must dispense with morals, which are, moreover, a detestable inconvenience. That Mr. Fullerton belongs to this school of sham realists pursuing a pseudo-science is apparent from his attitude towards moral impulses and ideals. He is not content to observe and record them: he must deride and denounce them. Anyone who believes in a moral law superior to the State is an ideologue—a polite synonym for a prig, in Mr. Fullerton's vocabulary. Humanitarianism is a gangrene except when it is a virus. The "international mind," i.e. the habit of thinking of the several nations of the civilized world as friendly and co-operating equals, is altogether anathema to Mr. Fullerton. This way of thinking is so different from the calm wisdom of Spinoza, who regards perpetual hostility as the natural and necessary relation of States to one another. If Mr. Fullerton were a true realist, he would not quarrel with his facts. His indignation with ideologues shows that his science is but his prejudice writ large.

Naturally, he seeks justification for his prejudice in history. The international mind always brings statesmen and nations to grief. "Real-Politik" always leads to security and strength. As a test case Mr. Fullerton discusses the failure of Napoleon III. The overthrow of the Second Empire was due, it seems,

entirely to the generous elements in Napoleon's foreign policy, to his belief in the cause of nationality and so on. He ought not to have troubled about the Italians or the Poles. "This policy was in sublime and absurd opposition to the best (i.e. most selfish) French national precedents and traditions." "It was also un-French, in the sense of being, from the point of view of French interests, anti-national. It was lacking in realism."

So Mr. Fullerton believes, as indeed his "science" or his prejudice compels him to believe, that the only things which have proved of lasting value and are worth remembering in the career of Napoleon III are the things which led to his overthrow. This verdict is, indeed, current in many textbooks, but its superficiality is manifest. The restless ambition of Napoleon III, which dissipated the resources of France and left her without a friend in Europe, was only in small part inspired and directed by his humanitarianism. In so far as his interfering activities were so guided, as in Italy in 1859, they stand to his credit and form a permanent contribution to progress. The most futile and disastrous of his undertakings, e.g. in the Crimea and in Mexico, were prompted by selfish considerations of prestige and national interest such as Mr. Fullerton himself would cordially approve. The Franco-Prussian War was provoked by an intervention grounded entirely on the supposed interests of France, interpreted as any realist would interpret them. The realist alloy in his humanitarianism, coupled with the elements of moral weakness in the origin and maintenance of his power, occasioned the undoing of Napoleon III. His position was not undermined by the elements of generosity which half

redeem his failure and entitle him to some share in the gratitude of Italy and mankind. The attempt to saddle his humanitarianism with the responsibility for his fall is the shallowest prejudice.

A realist who excludes moral considerations fails inevitably to grasp the full significance of many of the events he reviews. The defects of Mr. Fullerton's insight are apparent in his handling of the Dreyfus case, and of the question of Alsace and Lorraine. With regard to the first, his analysis up to a point is acute and informative. He makes his readers understand how there came to be a Dreyfus case, how the anti-Dreyfusards justified their position. He describes the issue in the following terms: "In that great religious war two conflicting French ideals fought almost to the death: the ideal of the *raison d'état* and the ideal of *les droits de l'homme*: the ideal of a sovereign centralized State, repressive of individual privilege, and the ideal of individual right chafing against laws and conventions that subordinate the individual to the interests of the community: the ideal of a justice based upon national expediency and of a justice rooted in the conviction peculiar to every human consciousness that the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness is no illusion." As far as it goes, this is admirable; but observe the philosophy involved in it. The opposed ideals are treated as *French* ideals, in keeping with the principle of Spinoza that the State determines *quid proprium, quid bonum.* Moral judgments are matters of national taste, it seems. This, however, must not be pressed too hard, for Mr. Fullerton regards the second French ideal as peculiar to every human consciousness. In fact, neither ideal is peculiar to France. In essence,

the French *raison d'état* is the Prussian doctrine of military necessity, or the Latin tag, *Salus rei-publicæ suprema lex*. Every nation is aware of the ideal, and has burnt incense to this well-known god. The rights of man are admittedly no monopoly of the French. But even so, for Mr. Fullerton these ideals are still matters of taste, though not exclusively French taste. He himself values the first more highly than the second. For the second, being peculiar to every human consciousness, is a little vulgar and democratic. It verges on bad taste. For all that, Mr. Fullerton recognizes that, under the special circumstances of the Dreyfus case, France could safely coquet with her second ideal. There was no harm in it, though moderation must be observed in devotion to such an ideal. It should further be noted that for this disciple of Spinoza the whole question was only a choice between two kinds of justice, both equally tenable, apparently. He slides over the real moral issue involved, the question whether a foul wrong was to remain unredressed for the sake of the prestige of the Army. Here is M. Sabatier's statement of the same issue: "At bottom, it was a question of conscience, a religious decision. Is it necessary to sacrifice everything in order to tell the truth exactly as one sees it? Is it necessary to imperil the very existence of the nation for the sake of a man to whom only a scrap of life remains? And those who asked the question felt that merely human forces united to counsel inaction, prudence, compromise; but one voice which they would have liked to silence said to them: 'You have no right to love your wife, your family, your country more than the truth. You have one duty, to be a martyr if necessary.'" The parallel

and the contrast between M. Sabatier and Mr. Fullerton are both instructive. The true inwardness of the crisis escapes the latter. In the Dreyfus affair, France, after a bitter struggle, repudiated the immoral doctrine to which Germany appealed when violating the neutrality of Belgium. The whole episode was a kind of moral preparation of France for the recent conflict. What Mr. Fullerton euphemistically terms " the ideal of justice based on national expediency " was nothing but the *denial* of justice in the supposed interests of the State. In the loyalty to truth and justice which insisted on righting the wrong done to Dreyfus, Mr. Fullerton discerns simply the assertion of individual privilege, not the safeguarding of the supreme interests of the community. He opposes two types of justice, both relative. He has no belief in justice itself, no notion that there is such a thing as an absolute principle of justice. Beginning in moral indifference, he ends inevitably in moral blindness.

The treatment of the question of Alsace-Lorraine in *Problems of Power* is equally inadequate. Here Mr. Fullerton sees only the blow to French prestige. He thinks the French would have been a mean-spirited people if they had not resented the loss of the provinces. The whole question is regarded from the standpoint of a blind and narrow patriotism. No reference is made to that deeper though not perhaps stronger current of feeling in France which, in Sabatier's phrase, transformed the dismemberment of the fatherland into a question of conscience. The wrong of the annexation lay not so much in the humiliation of France, which was in a measure deserved, as in the violence done to the inhabitants of Alsace and Lorraine. " The brutal and blundering sin " consisted

in altering the political status of the provinces against the unanimous desire of the people primarily concerned. The men of Alsace and Lorraine were treated as means and not as ends. A *real*-politician, like Mr. Fullerton, has nothing to say to all this. He does not care about democracy. At bottom he loathes it, in spite of his scientific acceptance of things as they are. He cannot condemn the annexation of Alsace and Lorraine any more than he can condemn the invasion of Belgium. Both are admirable examples on the sociological field of an aspect of the physical law of capillary attraction. Being, then, indifferent to the moral aspects of the question, he falls back on national pride. He sees and encourages only the narrower and lower elements in French resentment, the elements of mere patriotism which led her to demand the unconditional restitution of the provinces as so much property stolen from France. The higher point of view, which would have reversed the crime of 1871 by giving to the inhabitants of the provinces the right to determine their future, is completely ignored. Moreover, Mr. Fullerton is in consequence less than just to the French. He constantly girds at the humanitarianism of Jaurès and others who have sought to moderate Chauvinism. He does not hesitate to suggest that French professions regarding disarmament and arbitration have been polite and insincere. Yet, if his account of Alsace-Lorraine be correct, if it is only a matter of national prestige, Jaurès was absolutely right, and the alleged insincerity of France was without excuse. Only if there be a moral issue involved can we regret a humanitarianism which would compromise on it ; only on this condition can we justify a hesitation about disarmament that was not neces-

sarily insincere. The moral obligation which sustained our alliance with France—the obligation to right a wrong which concerns mankind—is denied and destroyed by the positive science for which Mr. Fullerton stands sponsor.

That moral indifference in politics erected into a system does not produce a scientific theory is clear from the resultant inability of its devotees to interpret the past. Does its claim improve when we turn towards the future ? As Mr. Fullerton rightly observes, " without prevision a State is doomed " ; and, if his Spinozistic philosophy be a genuine science, it should help us to the requisite prevision. In this connection, Mr. Fullerton points to the war itself, with a triumphant, " I told you so." His essay has been " the solemn precursor of that inevitable cataclysm." This is only impressive until one remembers that wars, including this war, have been as clearly foretold by men of prophetic insight as by political realists. It may fairly be claimed that F. W. Robertson of Brighton foresaw this cataclysm seventy years ago, just as John Woolman definitely forewarned his countrymen of the prospect of the American Civil War one hundred years before it took place. Mr. Gladstone anticipated the recent war as soon as he read the terms of the Peace of Frankfurt. Lord Courtney regarded it as the probable sequel of the South African War. The element of prevision is not the monopoly of Mr. Fullerton's science. All that his science contributes is the belief that the cataclysm was inevitable. Now, the war was not inevitable, and the assertion that it was inevitable is due either to sloppy thinking or sheer immorality.

Apart from the fact that in the light of his science

Mr. Fullerton regarded the war as inevitable, his claim that it stimulates prevision rests on his belief that democratic leaders who listen to humanitarian considerations do not take such long views as practical statesmen who pursue nothing but real interests.

Parliamentary democracies live from hand to mouth and cannot look far ahead. Such democratic countries are always troubled by demagogues, ideologues, humanitarian "little Englanders," and the like myopic prigs. "The foresight that is an essential characteristic of a national policy—the foresight which a monarchy like that of Germany, where the Emperor and the Chancellor are independent of the Reichstag, or a Consular Republic like that of the United States, where the President is largely responsible, can readily exercise—such a foresight tends to become impossible in Parliamentary régimes like those of England and France, where virtually single Chambers, dependent on the masses, readily sacrifice national to local interests, and intimidate the Government or Cabinet by the constant menace of withdrawing their support." This admiration for the old German Constitution comes out elsewhere in *Problems of Power*. Commenting on the tendency of French and British Governments to spend on social reform funds which might be devoted to Army and Navy, Mr. Fullerton says: "Germany is spared as yet these absurd consequences of representative Parliamentary government of which France and England are so proud." The beginning and end of Germany's prevision seems to have been the increase of her military expenditure.

Whether or no, in theory, one man in power during the pleasure of an autocrat has a better chance of

taking long views than a British or French Premier; in point of fact the superior foresight attributed to the German Government is a myth which Mr. Fullerton himself is obliged to explode. He quotes with approval a French writer who says: "All the embarrassments of modern Germany can be traced back to Bismarck. He forged with his own hands all the difficulties whose solution has yet to be found. His anti-Socialist, anti-Catholic, anti-Polish policy weighs still on the life of the country. It is said in its praise that this was a policy of realism. Its realism appears to have consisted chiefly in sacrificing the future to the present, and the future become the present takes its revenge." Mr. Fullerton considers that the same verdict must be passed on Bismarck's foreign policy. He then adds this naïve confession: "To prove the 'short-sightedness' of the Bismarckian vision was in no-wise the willing intent of the author of *Problems of Power*. The paradoxical ephemeralness of Bismarck's action is, however, one of the lessons of the facts set forth in the present volume." This lesson is, incidentally, the *reductio ad absurdum* of the whole philosophy of the book. Bismarck was a past-master in realism. He had unique opportunities of exercising prevision. He consistently sacrificed the future to the present, the eternal to the temporal. In the light of the war, democracies need not fear to challenge comparison with German autocracy on the score of foresight.

The great sin of democracies in this regard, which Mr. Fullerton laments along with Mr. Oliver, is studious moderation in armaments. Even in this special field Mr. Fullerton is guided by panic and not by science. His incapacity as a military critic is sufficiently evidenced by the following footnote:

"In November 1912 Viscount Haldane rebuked Lord Roberts for being ignorant of strategy, accusing him of overlooking the fact that England's safety depended on command of the sea. This rebuke fell from the lips of a man who some years before had spoken of 'a whole nation springing to arms on war being declared, and nobly preparing to submit itself to six months' training in order to meet the invading foe.' The date chosen by Lord Haldane for his rebuke was the eve of the day when Turkey agreed to begin negotiations for peace after a war that *had lasted only six weeks* and had driven her troops under the walls of Constantinople."

Mr. Fullerton has chosen to retain this egregious note in an edition of his work published during a war which has fulfilled Lord Haldane's anticipation to the letter, and justified his rebuke to Earl Roberts. Mr. Fullerton equates prevision with the piling up of armaments because his science forbids him to take anything else into consideration. Democracies, fortunately, are not so blind. If they endeavour to reduce expenditure on armaments, it is not want of foresight that determines their attitude. It is a deeper insight into both present and future which prompts their opposition to militarism. Democracies respond more readily than feudal autocracies to the new forces which are relegating "Real-Politik" to the limbo of obsolete follies.

To do Mr. Fullerton justice, he is aware of these forces, and even believes in their ultimate triumph. He recognizes that the old narrow nationalism is an anachronism. Problems like the control of the Dardanelles or of the Panama Canal must be settled in the international interest if not by international

authority National isolation and independence are no longer possible. And yet he clings to a blind feeling of nationality which he knows is doomed. He is utterly unable to appreciate and unwilling to promote the new influences, economic and moral, which are forcing us on towards international co-operation. He is petulantly querulous about any step in the direction of the internationalism which he sees must inevitably come. Reciprocity between Canada and the United States? Out upon it—the death of the British Empire! Treaties of arbitration between the United States and ourselves? Absurd, Utopian, tempting Providence, humanitarian gangrene again! —and yet the treaty exists, and has been a diplomatic asset to us in the war. At an Imperial conference, Mr. Fisher seriously suggested that the conference should be extended to include foreign Powers. Mr. Fullerton is outraged. This appears to be " a fatuity that echoes the incredible British ignorance of world-conditions, and is one with the sublimely stupid efforts to avert the risks of war by signing unrestricted arbitration treaties." And yet the suggestion that is denounced as a fatuity has now taken shape in proposals for a League of Nations, and Mr. Fullerton even has gone the length of advocating an Anglo-French-American alliance.

In truth, this pseudo-science of politics is intellectually as well as morally bankrupt. It is blind to the moral significance of the present, and has nothing but outworn prejudice to offer as a guide for the future. Mr. Fullerton's worth as a practical guide at the present time can be gauged from the foreword to the new edition of his book. The one principle he offers for the settlement of Europe is Napoleon's system of

so weakening Prussia that she shall no longer be a power in the political balance of Europe. From this point of view, he approves of the proviso in the treaty which forbids Austria to unite with the rest of Germany, and regrets that the left bank of the Rhine was not detached politically from Germany. An intelligent realist with a knowledge of history might have seen that the adhesion of Austria to Germany would be the simplest way of ending Prussia's predominance in Germany. But realists of Mr. Fullerton's school are seldom intelligent. The best way to defeat the object he has at heart is to treat the German people with such severity that they feel they have no way of escape except through the Prussian spirit and the Prussian method. This way of rehabilitating Prussia Mr. Fullerton naturally advocates. How utterly blinded he is by his false realism, his denunciation of the Armistice painfully reveals. He speaks of "a precipitate Armistice which called untimely and almost criminal halt in the efforts of half a dozen Powers to throttle Prussianism." What further political or military object could have been achieved by continuing the war, Mr. Fullerton does not condescend to say. The Armistice left Germany absolutely at our mercy, with no defence against injustice except our sense of honour and declarations of policy, neither of which have hampered our statesmen very obviously in dictating terms of peace. In his verdict on the Armistice, the naked ugliness of Mr. Fullerton's science stands disclosed. It means nothing but the purposeless, fanatical slaughter of the youth of Europe.

This confused sham realism for which Mr. Fullerton is sponsor is still the creed of conservative reactionaries throughout Europe. These men have betrayed

and are still betraying the ideals for which the Western democracies entered the war. As they helped to make the war, they now prevent the making of a tolerable peace. If the British are to serve the future, they must face realities indeed, but they must repudiate this short-sighted pseudo-science and those who stand for it. They must shake off the craven fear of being prigs, and believe once more that only righteousness exalteth a nation.

LIBERAL PROTESTANTISM AND MODERNIST CRITICISM

It is a significant fact that the book which ultimately called forth the condemnation of Modernism in the Roman Church was a defence of Catholicism and a polemic against Liberal Protestantism. Loisy's *L'Évangile et L'Église* was certainly a most searching criticism of Harnack's *Das Wesen des Christentums*, and even the orthodox could appreciate the spectacle of the Catholic scholar using the critical weapons of the Protestant against the Protestant position. Yet the Roman Church with a more than Trojan caution declined the gift of the new apologetic, being suspicious of its source. Loisy's book was held to be tainted with Protestantism and rationalism, in spite of the fact that it traversed the positions of Harnack in an extraordinarily acute and penetrating manner.

Outside the Catholic ranks it has been too readily assumed that Modernism was a variant of Protestantism, and Loisy's originality as a critic has been somewhat underrated. For it would not be extravagant to say that *L'Évangile et L'Église* represents new tendencies in criticism, and it is within the truth to say that it represents a new appreciation of principles which were being but slackly applied in the older Liberal Protestant schools. The most distinguished Modernist scholars stand for two principles of criticism,

both of which imperil the Protestant position. These two principles will be found in the two main lines of attack which Loisy develops against Harnack. His first main line of attack consists in this, that Harnack clothes primitive Christianity in too modern a dress. The Liberal Protestants, it is claimed, interpret the leading ideas of the Gospels in accordance with their own desires and preconceptions. But this is a fault in critical method. The first duty of the Modernist as critic, is not to modernize. "The Gospel has come into existence independently of ourselves: let us try to understand it in itself, before we interpret it in relation to our preferences or our needs." [1] "The historian must resist the temptation to modernize the idea of the kingdom." [2] We are always tempted, in reading the Gospels, to assume that what is important to us must have been important to Jesus and the first disciples. The historian has to overcome this natural bias, and the charge against the Liberal Protestant is that he has succumbed to it. The second line of attack which Loisy develops is even more destructive to Protestantism, if it can be sustained. He denies the validity of Harnack's enterprise, denies the possibility of detaching the essence of Christianity from the whole primitive Christian fact, at least in the way in which Harnack attempts to do it. Loisy challenges the Protestant appeal to primitive Christianity as a standard by which the subsequent development is to be judged. The essence of Christianity is not some static formula to be discovered in its beginnings. Its essence can only be understood by tracing the course of its development. Christianity is essentially

[1] *L'Évangile et L'Église*, p. xiv.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 56.

process, growth. To seek to return to primitive Christianity is to put the grown man back into baby clothes.

These principles are not invented simply to form a Catholic apologetic. They are accepted as fundamental in what may be called the Modernist school of criticism, whether the critics be Catholic or not. The British scholar who most closely resembles Loisy, and who may deservedly be compared with Loisy for brilliance and independence, is Prof. Kirsopp Lake. His quarrel with the Modern Churchmen is not unlike Loisy's conflict with Harnack, and his work is governed by essentially the same principles. Though he is not engaged in directly attacking Protestantism, liberal or popular, and much less in defending Catholicism, yet his results do tend to disparage the Reformation, and to undermine the Protestant appeal to the New Testament as to a classic standard of Christianity. Loisy's two main principles, without their conscious anti-Protestant application, may be found in the opening paragraphs of Lake's *Landmarks of Early Christianity*. The menace to Protestantism, however, is obvious, though it is not stressed, or necessarily intended. "At first sight," writes Prof. Lake, "the historian of religions appears to be faced by a number of clearly distinguished entities, to each of which he feels justified in giving the name of a separate religion; but on further consideration it becomes obvious that each one of these entities has been in a condition of flux throughout its history. Each began as a combination or synthesis of older forms of thought with comparatively little new in its composition; each ended by disintegrating into many elements of which the worst disappeared, while the best were taken up

into new life in some new religion. The movement was more marked at some times than at others, and the differentiation of the various religions depends chiefly on the recognition of these moments of more rapid change. But the process never really stopped; from beginning to end new elements were constantly absorbed and old elements dropped. For religion lives through the death of religions.

"Nothing illustrates this so well as the history of Christianity, for no religion is so well known. The facts are plainly visible, and would be plainly seen by all were it not for the general tendency of ecclesiastical scholarship to consult the records of the past only to find the reflection of its own features."

Here then we have the two main characteristics of Modernist criticism, its resolve to have done with the perpetual tendency to fashion the past according to our hearts' desires, and its belief in the supremacy of the Heraclitean principle πάντα ῥεῖ in the history of religion. The first characteristic leads the Modernist critic to distrust and disparage those suggestions of affinity between the New Testament and our own experience on which Protestantism builds. The second denies to primitive Christianity any such clearness and steadiness of outline, and any such finality as would render hopeful the appeal to it as a standard, The New Testament itself is not a classic standard, but a succession of imperfect syntheses, the first items in a progressive series unintelligible almost without the sequel.

Apart altogether from their reaction on Protestantism, these elements in Modernist criticism deserve closer examination The first is an indisputable prin-

ciple of historic study, and so far as it applies to the study of Christian origins, cannot be better formulated than in the words of Loisy already quoted: "The Gospel has come into existence independently of us: let us try to understand it in itself, before we interpret it in relation to our preferences or our needs." This principle is so important and temptations to forget it are so constant, that sharp reaffirmations of it by new schools of critics are a necessity for progress in historical inquiry. It would be difficult to overestimate the services of Loisy, Schweitzer, Lake and others who might be called Modernist in giving a fresh edge to the critical conscience on this issue. Nor is it surprising that Liberal Protestant scholarship has so largely been subjected to attack. The tardy recognition both of the eschatological and the sacramental features of New Testament Christianity indicated the extent to which Liberal Protestant scholarship had yielded to bias. The Modernist critics had good reason to constitute themselves the champions of a sound critical principle. Yet their position is not without its dangers. Probably every valid canon of criticism is liable to be distorted by an exaggerated rigour, or is shadowed by some fallacy. If the Protestant is tempted to assimilate the past to the present, the Modernist is apt to depreciate or deny any parallel between past and present. The caricature of the critical principle for which Lake and Loisy stand will appear in a tendency to exaggerate the remoteness and strangeness of the past. That this bias exists in Modernist criticism, that it is increasing and that it ought to be diminished, may be demonstrated by one or two examples from the writings of Prof. Lake himself.

We may take first the discussion of inspiration in *Landmarks of Early Christianity*. Prof. Lake explains the primitive Christian account of prophecy as due to possession by the Spirit of God, and suggests that this view of inspiration had its natural association with the belief in demon-possession which we reject. He goes on to argue that we can no longer hold the early Christian doctrine of the Spirit. He states the point thus :—

"Does the experience of controlling force which the prophet feels really come from some external influence, or is it merely his consciousness of ordinarily unknown depths in his own nature? It is obvious that a theory of prophecy could be made on lines rendered familiar by psychologists, by suggesting that what happens in a prophetic experience is the sudden 'coming up' of what is ordinarily 'subliminal.' It is, however, important to remember that this is merely a modern hypothesis, just as the Jewish view of inspiration was an ancient one. But it is impossible in a rational theology to combine fragments of two wholly different explanations of life and of the universe. 'The Spirit' was an admirably intelligible phrase in the Jewish or early Christian view of the universe; it does not fit in well with the modern view of the universe. Similarly the theory of subliminal action fits very well into the modern view, but not into that of traditional Christian theology. Preachers seem to make a serious mistake when they try to combine the language of two rival hypotheses to explain the same human experience."

Two features of Prof. Lake's treatment of this theme reveal the bias that may easily vitiate Modernist criticism. The first is, the close association of inspira-

tion with possession, the insistence on the parallel between inspiration by the Holy Spirit and possession by evil spirits. The second is the assertion that there is no common ground between the early Christian doctrine of the Spirit and any modern psychological account of inspiration. The parallel contains a dangerous exaggeration; the assertion is demonstrably false. It is not, indeed, necessary to dispute the parallel between belief in the Holy Spirit and belief in demons, nor the historical connection in origin of the conceptions. The idea of external spiritual influence is involved both in prophecy and in demon-possession, as Prof. Lake asserts. There were ecstatic gifts of the Spirit among the primitive Christians which resembled very closely the phenomena of demon-possession. But there the parallel ends. That the early Christians were conscious of a vast difference between prophetic inspiration and demon-possession, *psychologically as well as morally*, ought to be clear to any critic. In prophecy as St. Paul understood and experienced it there is no such supersession of the personality as is characteristic of demon-possession. But the Modernist critic is so impressed by the parallel that he is surprised by elements of difference even when he notes them. Thus, in the *Beginnings of Christianity*[1] the editors note:—

"Men were not left without help in an unequal combat with these malignant spirits. *Just as they could be possessed by unclean spirits, so also they could be inspired by the Holy Spirit* of God, and in the end good would triumph over evil. It would be *natural* to expect that just as the evil spirits were regarded

[1] Vol. i. p. 257.

as personal and as many, so there would be many holy spirits, but in point of fact there is little trace of this development. The Holy Spirit which inspires prophets is almost always one." If the writers had not exaggerated in their own minds the parallel between possession and inspiration, they would not have entertained this *natural* expectation. There is an essential difference in experience to which they fail to do justice, because they desire to associate primitive Christian views of inspiration as closely as possible with a belief in possession that is repugnant to the modern mind.

However parallel in origin and character to the belief in demon-possession the early Christian doctrine of the Spirit may be, is it really incompatible with modern psychology? Prof. Lake contrasts the subliminal consciousness with an external spiritual influence, and asserts that we may interpret prophecy in terms of the one or the other, but we may not combine the two. We may respectfully ask, Why not? There is no real incompatibility in the statements "the prophet spoke as moved by the Spirit of God" and "the prophet spoke through the sudden emergence into consciousness of something hitherto subliminal." Certainly the second statement cannot exclude the first, and the same person may whole-heartedly make both affirmations, if he wishes. To say that the prophet becomes conscious of ordinarily unknown depths in his own nature does not compel us to deny that he is controlled by some external influence. The alternative put by Prof. Lake would be a real alternative if our own natures below consciousness are inaccessible to influence from other external sources. So far from having proved this, modern psychology has practically

disproved it. This idea that our subconscious minds cannot be the theatre of the operations of any spiritual influence external to ourselves is not bound up with any view of the universe that modern thought has substantiated. Moreover, Prof. Lake does not hold it. He believes that "a helping hand of grace stretches out from the unknown to help man when he cries from the depths," [1] and he also develops a view of personalities as a series of islands which are really linked together in the foundations of their being—a view which, if taken seriously, means that in the ordinarily unknown depths of our nature we are more open to influences from a larger life than we are in our more superficial consciousness. There is no reason why a modern psychologist should not believe as definitely in control by the Holy Spirit as St. Paul did, nor yet why he should not express his doctrine of the Spirit in practically the same terms as those used by the Apostle. This alleged incompatibility between an early Christian doctrine of the Spirit and a theory of subliminal action is a mere Modernist bogey. Any Modernist who remains a theist can affirm the primitive Christian doctrine in the primitive Christian language without any disloyalty to modern psychology and without any conflict with the modern view of the universe, whatever it may be.

That this Modernist bias is growing in the case of Prof. Lake seems to be proved by comparing *Landmarks of Early Christianity* with his previous book, *The Stewardship of Faith*. Then he did not despair of combining the outlook of psychology with the standpoint of traditional theology, as witness the following footnote:—

[1] *Landmarks of Early Christianity*, p. 83.

"It is worth noticing that the modern psychiaters would say that the sacraments 'work' by suggestion; the theologians say by 'faith.' In the end they are not so far apart, and ultimately they will probably learn to understand and value each other's contribution." [1]

This hope of combining old and new is surely more capable of justification than the assertion of their utter incompatibility. The Modernist tendency to exaggerate the gulf between past and present is manifestly impairing Prof. Lake's judgment as a critic.

A further illustration of the same characteristics may be found in Prof. Lake's handling of the subject of salvation. In *The Stewardship of Faith* [2] he works out the contrast between the intellectual attitudes of the Greek and the Jew. He describes the Greek as seeking a new nature through sacramental regeneration, while the Jew is concerned with security from the impending wrath of God and wants to know what he must do to be saved. It is suggested that Greek and Jew stand, not so much for national as for psychological differences, and the difference is practically equivalent to William James's contrast between the twice-born and the once-born. But when we turn to *The Landmarks of Early Christianity*, we find that the Jewish and Greek conceptions of salvation have been thinned down until they leave no possibility of parallel with any modern psychology. The Greek idea of salvation is sacramental and magical, the Jewish is eschatological and mythological. Neither has part or lot in modern thinking.

[1] *Stewardship of Faith*, p. 117 *n*. [2] *Ibid.*, pp. 86 ff.

" We can, with logical propriety, accept the Græco-Jewish eschatology or the Græco-Oriental sacramental regeneration if we reject modern thought. But we cannot, except in intellectual chaos, combine the two, or appropriately express modern thought in language belonging to the ancient systems.

" The modern man does not believe in any form of salvation known to ancient Christianity."

If we concede to Prof. Lake that the magical and mythological elements are absolutely alien to our world of thought, and that we may not even find natural the parallels to modern religious psychology which Prof. Lake himself discerned in his earlier book, yet surely the concluding sentence, " The modern man does not believe in any form of salvation known to ancient Christianity," is an exaggeration. If Prof. Lake's analysis of early Christian conceptions of salvation were exhaustive, we might agree with him, but he has, as a matter of fact, simply emphasized those elements in early Christianity which are most alien to our ways of thinking, and ignored all those elements which we have in common with the first Christians. In particular, he passes over the all-important present moral element in salvation, as described in the New Testament, and indeed in other early Christian writings, and there are plenty of men and women to-day who, in the light of their own experience, have no difficulty at all in understanding what St. Paul meant by " being delivered from the body of this death," or by " becoming a new creation in Christ Jesus." The moral salvation that was offered to Jew and Greek in the first century does not differ from the moral salvation that the modern man enters into. The limitations of Prof. Lake's

handling of this subject again betray the Modernist bias.

Perhaps two more illustrations may be permitted. In connection with the Prologue to St. John's Gospel, Prof. Lake adduces a passage from Cornutus which he thinks may throw light on the Logos doctrine of the Evangelist. He insists that the difficulty of gauging the significance of the Prologue is due to the fact that the word " Logos " is used in different ways in different systems of thought. He contrasts the Stoic idea of the Logos as immanent with the Platonic idea of the Logos as a connecting link between a transcendent God and the world ; and then we come to a third use of the term Logos :—

" Finally, a mediatizing writer such as Cornutus could explain that the Logos was Hermes, and so triumphantly reconcile philosophy and myth by giving a mythological meaning to a philosophic term."

Then, after suggesting that the writer of the Fourth Gospel seems to view the Logos in the Platonic rather than the Stoic way, he adds :—

" But how far is the Prologue really metaphysical, and not comparable in its identification of Jesus and the Logos to Cornutus with his identification of Hermes and the Logos ? "

Now it may be pointed out, in the first place, that the identification of Hermes with the Logos is not an alternative view to the Stoic and Platonic views previously summarized. If the term Logos is being used philosophically by Cornutus, he may very well be using it either in the Stoic or the Platonic sense. The so-called " mediatizing " view is not different from the Stoic or Platonic views. It may include either or combine both. As a matter of fact, Cornutus

is generally recognized as a Stoic, and his interpretations of other Greek gods, of Zeus for example, are certainly Stoic in tendency. If, then, he identifies Hermes with the Logos, we may assume that he uses the term in the Stoic sense. Again, it is absurd to describe his chapter on Hermes as giving a mythological meaning to a philosophic term. What he is really doing is giving a philosophic meaning to a mythological figure. He does not say to his pupil: "You can understand this difficult philosophic word 'Logos' by recognizing that the Logos is Hermes," but: "You can understand these curious stories of Hermes if you recognize that Hermes is nothing but the Logos." [1]

To return, then, to the suggested parallel between the Prologue of St. John's Gospel and the writings of Cornutus, we may note, first, that if the parallel exists, the Prologue may none the less be really metaphysical, and the inquiry as to its affinities with Stoic or Platonic or other doctrines of the Logos is not rendered superfluous. And, secondly, we may note that if the parallel exists, it will be found in one or both of two points The Evangelist may hold the same view of the Logos as Cornutus holds, and he may regard Jesus in the same way as Cornutus regards Hermes. On the former point the parallel is only

[1] As a matter of fact, Cornutus is not here giving a Logos doctrine in the full meaning of the term. In the passage which Professor Lake cites, "Logos" is simply "Reason," the Reason that distinguishes men from animals. It is not the soul of the world, or even the link between a transcendent God and the world. When Cornutus does refer to the Logos in the sense in which it is manifestly used in the Prologue to the Fourth Gospel, he identifies the Logos, not with Hermes, but with Heracles. *Ἡρακλῆς δ' ἔστιν ὁ ἐν τοῖς ὅλοις λόγος καθ' ὃν ἡ φύσις ἰσχυρὰ καὶ κραταιά ἐστιν.* (c. 31.)

significant as a footnote to Dr. Harris's *Stoic Origins of the Prologue*. On the latter point the parallel clearly breaks down. To Cornutus, Hermes is simply a mythological figure, and to the writer of the Fourth Gospel, Jesus is certainly a historic person. Of the many parallels that have been adduced from time to time to illustrate the doctrine of the Logos in the Fourth Gospel, it would be difficult to find one less relevant than this sentence from Cornutus, and it would seem to follow that here too we have the tendency of the Modernist critic to assume that the more strange and bizarre an interpretation of early Christian thought is, the more likely it is to correspond with historical fact.

A more significant illustration of this tendency may be found in Prof. Lake's interpretation of the non-resistance teaching in the Sermon on the Mount. He claims both that Jesus was a pacifist and that He was mistaken. Recent experience has shown resistance to evil to be a duty. How, then, did Jesus come to teach non-resistance? Prof. Lake would trace this element in Christ's teaching to a limitation of His view of God imposed by inherited and contemporary thought. Jesus believed in a God of miraculous intervention, and as God will punish and restrain evil-doers, men need not believe God works only through human agency, and so we can leave vengeance to God. It is true that Jesus and most of His contemporaries believed in miraculous divine intervention, and most people to-day do not, but it is certain that this belief—a belief, be it noted, alien to the modern mind as Prof. Lake interprets it—is not the source or explanation of the non-resistance teaching in the Sermon on the Mount. Jesus bids us love our enemies,

not because God will protect or avenge us miraculously, but because only by so doing can we be God's children. "He founds it on the grand courtesy of God." Jesus may be right or He may be wrong, but in any case, He is not in this matter a mere representative of peculiarities of the thought-world of the first century. Nor has the twentieth century demonstrated His error. Few will share Prof. Lake's confidence that the experience of the last few years has shown non-resistance to be mistaken. Another observer says: "Of late years many who are not Quakers have come to think that there is more to be said for the Quaker teaching with regard to war than is generally believed."

It is not possible in this way to cut all the links between primitive Christianity and the modern mind. The mind of Jesus and of His first apostles is not really so inaccessible to the ordinary reader to-day as Prof. Lake would have us believe when he writes :—

"No historical reconstruction can make the thoughts and words of Jesus adequate for our generation, or even intelligible except to those who have passed through an education in history impossible for most."

The Modernist criticism has indeed refuted the claim of popular Protestantism to be the simple reproduction of primitive Christianity. It is clear that even apostolic Christianity is not, strictly speaking, either Protestant or Catholic. Both the Catholic and the Protestant positions may fairly be described as dependent on differing value judgments within the covers of the New Testament. Critical study also justifies the Modernist in claiming that primitive Christianity cannot be reproduced. We cannot simply

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return to the thought-world even of the New Testament. But it is a *tour de force* to deny the reality of the link between Protestantism and St. Paul, let us say. And it is a still greater *tour de force* to deny that the spirit of Jesus can be conveyed by His words across the centuries to the men of the present generation. Liberal Protestantism may have erred by trying to make Jesus a denizen of the nineteenth century, but it is a greater error on the part of the Modernists to try to confine Jesus within the limits of the first century.

If, then, the Protestant appeal to the New Testament cannot be ruled out on the ground that there is an impassable gulf fixed between the first century and the present day, is the Protestant contention really overthrown by the other cardinal principle of Modernism—that Christianity is not a single religion but a complex of many, and that it must be regarded as a process and not a result? The appeal to this principle against the reformers would only be valid if we exclude the Reformation itself from the process, which is Christianity. If we exclude the Reformation from the process of development, as both Loisy and Lake appear to do, then indeed this Modernist theory of development furnishes a Catholic apologetic, but it does this only by begging the question at issue. A scientific historian of religions is not permitted to start with this arbitrary judgment as to what does or does not belong to the true development of Christianity. The tests of true development which Prof Lake seems to accept are, first, historic continuity; and secondly, that the process is synthetic. In the *Beginnings of Christianity*[1] we have this sentence:

[1] Vol. i. p. 265.

"To the historian of religions, Christianity appears, not a single religion, but a complex of many, justified in claiming the name of Christianity by reason of the thread of historic continuity which runs through and connects its component parts"; and in *The Landmarks of Early Christianity* we have the assertion that "Christianity begins like other religions as a synthesis of older forms of thought, with comparatively little new," and that "the history of Christianity might be written as a series of syntheses with the thought and practice of the Roman world." "As to the Reformation, it is impossible for the student of history to feel that it can be regarded as a synthesis. Indeed, it seems ominously like the first step in that disintegration which has always been the last stage in the story of each religion." It follows that the process, which is Christianity, is a succession of syntheses without violent interruption, and that the Reformation marks the setting in of another process, the process of disintegration rather than development.

When we remember the extraordinary transformations which institutions have undergone, we may question whether mere historic continuity would justify the application of the term Christianity to each successive synthesis, and there is some danger of the name of Christianity becoming meaningless in the hands of the Modernist critic, if he is satisfied to give it to any development which is attached to primitive Christianity simply by the thread of historic continuity. But the real issue turns on the nature and character of the series of syntheses which do actually play such an important part in Church History. Prof. Lake assumes that synthesis is progress. "Each religion began as a combination or

synthesis of older forms of thought with comparatively little new in its composition; each ended by disintegrating into many elements of which the worst disappeared while the best were taken up into new life in some new religion." Both these propositions are doubtful, but we may pass over the first and concentrate on the second. Is it the case that in each successive synthesis which constitutes a new religion, or through which any given religion passes, that the worst elements disappear and that the best are taken up into new life? Primitive Christianity, on this view, begins by taking up all that was best in Judaism and leaving behind all that was worst. In the light of Church History, can we legitimately say that? In the successive syntheses with Roman thought and practice, can we assume that there came over from the disintegrating paganism only good elements, and that bad elements were excluded? There is no reason *a priori* to expect that, and the study of the facts of Church History does not justify this optimism. Is this picture of a series of syntheses that always carries on the best and discards the worst really true in the history of any religion? Did Buddhism carry on only what was good in Brahminism, and exclude all that was evil? Did Mahomet take over from the Judaism and Christianity of his day all that was good, and leave behind all that was evil? Or did primitive Quakerism take over from Puritanism all that was good and nothing that was evil? This optimistic view of the synthetic process which *is* Church History has neither philosophic nor empirical justification. We cannot exclude the possibility that in primitive Christianity there were elements, essential elements, the best elements, which were not fully assimilated

in the syntheses with the thought of the Roman world. And if that possibility exists, there will always be room for a movement which goes back to the New Testament and asks whether, in our successive syntheses, we have not overlooked something of importance. The re-discovery of some element of primitive Christianity which has been ignored or worn down in the process with which the Modernist identifies Christianity may no doubt be disintegrating, but it may be essential for the development and the understanding of Christianity itself.

It is certain that the Protestant position cannot fairly be dismissed by this Modernist emphasis on flux and movement in Christian thought, and ultimately it is not a critical principle, but a negative attitude towards the Reformation itself which gives the suggestion of anti-Protestant bias to the writings of Prof. Lake. It is remarkable that, in speaking of the syntheses that constitute the history of Christianity, he fastens on the great figures of Origen and St. Thomas Aquinas, and even associates an important ethical synthesis with the name of Ambrose, but there is no mention of St. Augustine, whose work as a theologian is at least as synthetic and as significant as that of Origen or St. Thomas Aquinas. But the Augustinian synthesis was based on an element in Christianity that is very important for the understanding of the Reformation and for the interpretation of New Testament Christianity, but which did not happen to appeal very much to Origen, and which does not appeal very much, apparently, to Prof. Lake. But clearly the historian of religions, and of the Christian religion in particular, cannot afford to ignore this element, or to treat it simply as a disintegrating

factor. The Liberal Protestant position has not really been disposed of by Modernist criticism, and the anti-Protestant bias, which undoubtedly exists among Modernist critics, is likely adversely to affect the value of their criticism itself.

THE ATTITUDE OF MR. H. G. WELLS TOWARDS JESUS CHRIST

Is Mr. Wells really among the prophets? If he is, does he stand in the Christian succession? These questions are necessarily raised by the publication of *God, the Invisible King*, and are being eagerly canvassed. Those who are familiar with the ardour with which Mr. Wells pursues a new idea are inclined to doubt his claim to the title of evangelist. They suspect a new pose, a further instalment of the provisional thinking in which Mr. Wells is so fertile, or at best, a sincere and vivid impressionism turned momentarily on to the things of religion. There are others who catch the note of a true evangel in Mr. Wells's new work. They do not doubt but that he has come into touch with the Living God. Once assured of this, they insist that the new prophet is a Christian and a Churchman, in spite of his own vigorous disclaimers. A few trivial misunderstandings due to conventional presentations of Jesus and the Gospel stand between Mr. Wells and the acceptance of the Christian faith. The failure is on the side of the Christian Church rather than on the side of the new theologian. He is a true prophet, and at bottom a Christian prophet.

There is, then, on the one hand a tendency to belittle the popular novelist as a religious teacher and on the other a tendency to minimize the gulf between his

message and the Christian faith. Justice to Mr. Wells may require resistance to either tendency.

The attempt to discount or deny the religious significance of *God, the Invisible King*, may be dismissed, so far as it rests on the idea that we have to do with a mere pose, with superficial and barely sincere advocacy of an interesting hypothesis on the part of the author. At the lowest estimate, the work is the outcome of an impressionism which is akin to vision. An enthusiasm which may prove transient is not of necessity objectless. It does not cease to be genuine because it ceases to be. It is possible, though not probable, that Mr. Wells's interest in his religious faith will evaporate and be transferred to some fresh theme. It is not merely possible, but probable, that he will not adhere strictly to many of the statements of his position to which he has now committed himself. Yet such possibilities and probabilities do not disprove his claim to be the instrument of a genuine revelation. To put the case extremely, should Mr. Wells prove disobedient to his heavenly vision, the heavenly character of his vision is not thereby called in question.

There is truth in the observation that " the war has not made men different ; men remain what they were, only more so." Intensification is a more frequent experience than conversion. For Mr. Wells, as for others, the war has deepened some previous convictions, and illuminated some conceptions, which before were but dimly discerned. He has brought out of his treasury things old as well as new. And this is an element of strength rather than weakness. The real significance of some familiar things now stands out as never before. It is not a question of scrapping one

philosophy and adopting some scheme of new thought. It is a question rather of deeper insight into old truth, a fresh sense of proportion. Mr. Wells is not likely to desert his new-found faith because in some measure at least it grows out of his earlier beliefs. Yet there is something new, as there must be in any serious endeavour to read aright the apocalypse of the war. And *God, the Invisible King*, is primarily an interpretation of the present crisis. It is not on that account to be regarded as merely a provisional faith for to-day. It is rather a faith for to-morrow grounded on the experience of to-day.

It should be noted, then, that what Mr. Wells has to say of God is almost entirely a discovery of God in the light and darkness of this " Pentecost of calamity." He does not set out to interpret the original Christian experience, nor does he take into account the long religious history of mankind, except, indeed, so far as the one or the other lives in the heart of present happenings. Here, in *God, the Invisible King*, we have not exactly the religion of the trenches, but the religion of an observer who has responded sympathetically to many of the profoundest thoughts and emotions stirred up by the war. Though it says little about the war itself, it is essentially a war-book.

The title of the book constitutes a noble affirmation. It reasserts the sovereignty of God. And it is something more than the sense of God's supremacy. It exalts the moral sovereignty of God. This outruns the fatalism of the soldier. The trenches create a kind of belief in God's overwhelming power. The individual counts for so little, and is at the mercy of a blind fate. There is no element of moral sovereignty in this view

of God. But when Mr. Wells speaks of God as King, he expresses his conviction that the judgments of God are abroad in the earth, that the allied Governments are the instruments of a higher purpose than any of which they or their peoples are fully conscious. It is difficult to measure the strength of this belief in a more than human justice asserting itself in this less than human conflict. But at least there is involved in the war a moral cause which is divine inasmuch as it embraces all mankind, and which calls for a higher loyalty than patriotism. Even the States which serve this cause have no claim on our absolute devotion. We serve them in so far as they serve God, and God is our King, not our Ally. A republic is a better form of government than a monarchy, just because it is less easy to idealize it. It leaves room for theocracy. Other forms of government lend themselves to idolatry.

The God whom Mr. Wells has discovered is not omnipotent. He is an uncrowned King. Some day He will triumph. His purpose is thwarted, His triumph indefinitely postponed, by the intractableness of matter. The inertia of Nature opposes His onward march. But this doctrine of God's limited power is not merely an attempt to solve the age-long problem of the apparent indifference of Nature to moral issues. It also reflects a view which Mr. Wells impressed on us in pre-war days—the view, namely, that our moral progress has not kept pace with our scientific progress. Our power to utilize the forces of Nature is not under adequate moral control. Moreover, this assertion of God's non-omnipotence, if such an awkward phrase be permitted, seems to be required by the war-conditions. For the conflict is real and the immediate

issue uncertain. The cause of righteousness involved in the war is not sure to triumph now, though somewhere and somehow it must triumph hereafter. Mr. Wells is well aware that the servants of a great cause may unintentionally betray it, and that our own governing classes, for example, through sheer stupidity and conventionality, may sacrifice the Kingdom of God to the British Empire, or even to their own class-interest and prestige. The fight for right so easily founders on human stupidity. It is a perilous service, the service of God, the Invisible King, and the end is not yet.

What, then, is God like? When Mr. Wells approaches this question, his answer comes in war-terms. God is Courage, God is Youth, God is Love. "How trite and inadequate," the unsympathetic reader will at once remark. But those who are not blind to the heroism of the war will say rather, "How true." For the redeeming feature of war is its discovery of an exalted, a divine quality in youth and courage. War also throws a new light on God's love. For the love of God is now interpreted, not through the love of man and woman, or the love of father and child, but through the fellowship of comrades in arms, through the bond that subsists between the beloved captain and his men. God's love is not best revealed as something sheltering. He cares for us, but He sets us in the high places in the field. He does not so much bestow comfort as inspire courage. Again, we would stress the element of vision in this account of God. It is not a fancy picture, drawn in contrast with current presentations of Christianity. It is a genuine understanding of the way in which God reveals Himself to many in this war. It inter-

prets something of the experience which made some of our best say, "In this war it is better never to return than never to have been."

At first sight it may seem strange that Mr. Wells should not connect his new-found faith in God with the figure of Jesus. For the God he has discovered is manifestly revealed in the person of Christ. Youth, courage, the love of a leader who demands all from his men—these qualities are writ large in the pages of the Gospels. It was a true instinct that led the early Christians in the catacombs to picture their Lord as radiant with youth. It was a mistake on the part of Isaac Watts to change the second line of his great hymn, which originally ran

> When I survey the wondrous Cross
> Where the *Young* Prince of Glory died;

the accent he restored was not worth the adjective he sacrificed. It is curious how insistent the early Moravians were on the youth of Christ, e.g.:—

> Ye who would rather live and fight awhile
> Than be dismissed as yet from glorious toil;
> Who from the world's bewitching lusts are fled,
> And burn t'advance the glory of your Head!
> *Before the Youth divine*, come, bow the knee.

Watts's hymn is earlier than the Moravian book by a quarter of a century, so the two discoveries of Christ's *youth* as a spiritual fact are independent. Youth and courage are inseparable from the central figure of the Gospels. And the war has taught us that we have made Christianity too much a religion of comfort, and have obscured the element of risk, the call to adventure

which is native to it. Neville Talbot has reminded us how lamentably many presentations of Christianity have failed on this side. There is evidence on all hands that we have so preached Christ that the Christian faith is regarded as the natural possession of those who play for safety. And yet the opposite of all this can be clearly seen in the call of Jesus to His disciples.

The coincidence between Mr. Wells's account of God and certain aspects of Christ is so obvious that many suppose the crudities and defects of Christianity as preached before the war are the only barrier between Mr. Wells and the true Christian faith. That Mr. Wells has drawn nearer to the Christian position we gladly recognize. His insistence on the fact that God is a Person suffices to prove that. For this is beyond anything given to us in the earlier editions of *First and Last Things*. Then Mr. Wells described his position thus: "I admit the splendid imaginative appeal in the ideal of a divine-human friend and mediator. If it were possible to have access by prayer, by meditation, by urgent outcries of the soul, to such a being whose feet were in the darknesses, who stooped down from the light, who was at once great and little, limitless in power and virtue, and one's very brother: if it were possible by sheer will in believing to make and make one's way to such a helper, who would refuse such help? But I do not find such a being in Christ. *I do not find, I cannot imagine such a being.*[1] I wish I could." Now Mr. Wells, not through an effort of will, but through the godliness he has seen in the boys at the front, and

[1] In the new edition of *First and Last Things* this sentence is omitted. Mr. Wells is conscious of a new attitude towards God, but not towards Christ.

through something more inward than that, has discovered such a being. But still he does not find his God in Christ. He knows that God comes into contact with individual men and women. He has discovered the cleansing reality of prayer. He has found not merely a divine friend, but a king. He has drawn nearer to Christianity: he has done more, he has corrected a false emphasis in the older Evangelicalism, whereby the salt tended to lose its savour. And yet he stands aloof from Christ.

The attitude of Mr. Wells to Jesus Christ is not altogether explained by the traditional over-emphasis on the meekness of Christ or by the inherent tendency of orthodoxy towards Docetism, towards obscuring and damaging the reality of Christ's manhood. Not only is the prevalence of defective presentations of Christ and the Gospel overrated, but soldiers who share the faith of Mr. H. G. Wells do connect it with Jesus. The moral principle at stake in the war was fundamentally a Christian principle, as it presented itself to thousands and thousands who volunteered in 1914. It is a soldier who writes,

> I would not to Thy bosom fly
> To slink off till the storm go by. . . .
> Flog me and spur me, set me straight
> At some vile job I fear and hate,

and who feels that such a prayer is after the mind of Christ. There is something of Christ in the God whom Mr. Britling discerns in the boys who lay down their lives. Mr. Wells was aware of this when he wrote the novel. His most appreciative reference to Christ is in Mr. Britling's speech: " After all, the real God of the Christians is Christ, not God Almighty—a poor mocked

and wounded God nailed on a Cross of matter. . . . Some day He will triumph." But in *God, the Invisible King*, Mr. Wells does not develop this view. He rather recedes from it. And it is not enough to say that Mr. Wells is put off by current conventional views of Christ. Why is he content with such views? Why does he not look at the figure of Jesus with his own eyes? And if he has done so, why does he fail to see what others see in the Gospel-portrait?

It is curious to observe a certain vacillation in the grounds which determine Mr. Wells's negative estimate of Jesus. When he wrote *First and Last Things*, the sinlessness of Jesus was the stumbling-block. Christ seemed "an incomprehensibly sinless being." "His sinlessness wears His incarnation like a fancy-dress, all his white self unchanged. He had no petty weaknesses." At that time Mr. Wells felt that the word from the Cross, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" was the only feature of the story which brought Christ near. "The last cry of despair is the one human touch, discordant with all the rest of the story. One cry of despair does not suffice. The Christian's Christ is too fine for me." . . . The resurrection, too, seemed designed to cover up a human failure which might otherwise have appealed. So Mr. Wells turned unresponsive from the figure on the Cross. In *God, the Invisible King*, Mr. Wells is still unresponsive, but his reasons have changed. Now the cry of despair which once pleaded for arrest of judgment has become the cause of offence. It is a weakness, human enough, but not heroic, not regal. Jesus is a poor weak, non-resistant figure, not the leader of soldiers. Too much is made of His sufferings and death. Mr. Wells believes in a suffering God and even in a dying

God. But in his thought of God, suffering and death are incidental. To dwell on these things, to preach Christ crucified, is morbid and unhealthy. The emphasis must fall, not on the incidental suffering and death, but on the essential struggle and triumph. Mr. Wells does not stay to consider whether this line of thought might not be satisfied by revaluing the Resurrection. But in general he once felt that Jesus was not human enough; now he feels that Jesus is too human, too helpless, to represent the invisible king.

Behind such a vacillation in judgment it is legitimate to suspect the existence of a personal equation. The presence of something or the absence of something in Mr. Wells himself stands between him and a more appreciative recognition of Jesus Christ. It may be simply his preoccupation with the immediate war-time experience and its religious content. Indeed, his resolute endeavour to bring out the positive meaning of this experience does in a large measure account not only for the limitations of his God, but for the limitations of his theology. Thus Mr. Wells rules out the sex-life as in nowise symbolic or interpretative of the love of God. He dismisses hastily, almost scornfully, all quietism and mysticism which contain an erotic element. He has no use for Madame Guyon, and with Mr. Lowes Dickinson he dislikes the hymn "Jesus, *Lover* of my soul." It is not altogether surprising that one who has written so much of the besetting of sex should find in sex a hindrance rather than a help to faith in God. The author of *Ann Veronica* is not well qualified for vision in this realm. Moreover, war brings with it a lowering of sex-morality. It does actually desecrate sex-relations, and so far unfit them to be the vehicle of

religious emotion. Loyalty to the experience of war-time helps to explain why Mr. Wells says nothing of the Fatherhood of God and is blind to so much that others have seen in the Love of Christ. But we may ask whether he is not interpreting his sacred script too narrowly? While war on one side seems to shut out the sex-life from all that is holy, another and deeper aspect of the love of man and woman is revealed when we recall Wordsworth's Happy Warrior, and the part which home-ties play in the consciousness of good men and true. Mr. Wells forgets the soldier who

> Is yet a soul whose master-bias leans
> To home-felt pleasures and to gentle scenes:
> Sweet images! which, wheresoe'er he be,
> Are at his heart: and such fidelity
> It is his darling passion to approve:
> More brave for this, that he hath much to love.

There is no trace of homeliness in Mr. Wells's God, and yet home is inextricably bound up with the sacred cause for which men fight. After all, the defect here is in the observer rather than in the war-time experience.

In another direction, the stress of war more obviously influences and narrows Mr. Wells's judgment. He is alienated from Jesus because he regards Jesus as weak and non-resistant. He suspects that Jesus belongs to the Pacifists, and Mr. Wells is full of contempt for the Pacifists. The theme requires a closer analysis. Mr. Wells distinguishes three classes of conscientious objectors and yielding Pacifists. (It is to his credit that he is aware of distinctions and groups amongst conscientious objectors.) His three types are: First,

the religious fanatic who takes his stand rigidly and literally on "Thou shalt not kill" or "Resist not evil"; second, the resentful employee, the man with a grievance, who acknowledges no debt to the State and whose mental horizon is bounded by class-war; and third, the genteel, middle-class rentier, who is disturbed by the rude intrusion of war into his life of cultured ease. The first two types really exist, and though they are entitled on the ground of sincerity to the exemptions which Parliament intended and public opinion subsequently withheld, yet Mr. Wells is right in regarding such citizens as backward rather than as the vanguard of a new crusade. But if Jesus be non-resistant, to which of the types does He belong? Clearly not to the second and third, and will anyone contend that He went to the Cross out of a blind adherence to the literal interpretation of some moral maxim? Either Mr. Wells has wrongly surrendered Jesus to the Pacifists or else there is more in Pacifism than he has noticed, and his treatment of conscientious objectors must be due to the "inherent vicious disposition of the human mind to intensify classification." There is something to be said for the latter alternative. It is observable that between the best men in the trenches and the best men in the cells to-day there is little difference either of human quality or of religious idealism. Courage, youth and heroic love are to be found in prison as well as at the front. The exasperating thing about conscientious objectors is that many of them would have made such splendid soldiers. (Can it be that, after all, they are the real militia Christi?) Rightly or wrongly, these men from their knowledge of war and their understanding of Jesus have come to believe that over the weapons

of war God has written *Haud tali auxilio.* If they are mistaken in supposing that war prevents no evil, at least they are right in thinking that war can never build the New Jerusalem, and will necessarily hinder constructive work by the welter of passion it brings with it. Mr. Wells himself agrees with their condemnation of war, but he cannot away with their refusal to participate in it, and he suspects that they have some justification in the attitude of Jesus. Therefore he stands aloof from Jesus. He perceives there is something more in the Cross of Christ than is found in the sacrifice of youth on the battlefield, and he is afraid lest the recognition of that something more should dim the excellence of the sacrifice that means so much. Yet nothing is more certain than this, that if Mr. Wells can find his God only in the youth, courage and heroic love of the soldier, he will lose Him. There must be some other field than the battlefield in which these great qualities come to their own and reveal God. There must be some more abundant life in which young men can hear the call to a supreme devotion. Is it possible that the key to this life, which Mr. Wells's faith requires but cannot exhibit, is to be found in the Cross of Christ ? Can Mr. Wells define for us the service of God's Kingdom without recalling us to the ideals which Christ died to establish ?

An incidental view of the Cross is apt to be associated with an incidental view of sin. Does the comparative indifference of Mr. Wells towards the crucified Christ spring from his estimate of sin ? No one can say that Mr. Wells now treats sin lightly. When he wrote *First and Last Things* he seemed to underrate its gravity. " The essential trouble of my life," he assured us, " is its petty weaknesses." Is it impertinent to suggest

that when he so wrote he did not know himself? But in his new work he says many true and penetrating things about sin, which show a more serious handling of the problem of erring humanity. But has Mr. Wells gone deep enough? It is a little curious that he treats sin primarily as a blemish in the army of the Heavenly King, an impediment in the service we seek to render to God, and not as the essential enemy with whom the war is waged. Or perhaps it would be truer to say that for Mr. Wells sin is not ultimate, it is a symptom rather than a cause. We are in the presence of natural forces imperfectly controlled. That is the origin and source of sin. Disorder is the great antagonist. Christ suffers, Mr. Britling asserts, on a Cross of *matter*, and the phrase is significant. God, the Invisible King, struggles with Necessity, striving to subdue that veiled Being which dominates the unsympathetic if not actively hostile world of nature. As in earlier days, so still, Mr. Wells seems more impressed with the untidiness of the world than with its sin. The Cross is a cross of matter, and not the expression of a positive evil will. One broad lesson of the war, we are sometimes told, is that we have thought too meanly of human nature. It is true that war has brought to light the sterling stuff to be found in average man. But the war speaks with two voices about human nature. If, on the one hand, it reveals this root of goodness in the great mass of humanity, it reveals on the other the appalling mystery of iniquity. Perhaps we are discounting the latter too readily. If Mr. Wells were facing it more steadily, he might discover for us a deeper significance in the Cross. He has not fully gauged the nature of the warfare to which he is called and to which he is calling others. He is not the

prophet who will bring Europe to a deep repentance. For that we await the herald, not of God, the Invisible King, but of the King made visible in that strange man on the Cross.

A fair critique of the relation of Mr. Wells's gospel to Christianity might reach this conclusion. There is a real affinity between the truth as Mr. Wells sees it and the Christian faith. There are more numerous points of contact than he himself admits. But his consciousness of difference is neither superficial nor mistaken. The serious divergence does not lie in his cavalier treatment of the doctrine of the Trinity, nor in his over-confident dualism. It lies in his negative estimate of Jesus. This attitude towards Jesus Christ is not fully explained by the misrepresentation of His followers. It is determined in part at least by the limitations of the religious experience into which Mr. Wells has entered, conditioned as that experience is by the facts of war. For Mr. Wells is not alone in this aloofness from what is fundamental in the Christian creed. Others feel that war fashions an instinctive belief in God and immortality which is something other than the Christian faith. The crucial question is, Have we to do with a vision of another God, or an imperfect vision of the Christian God? There are grounds for holding to the latter view. For neither Mr. Wells nor the world at large can base religion exclusively on the strained experience of the present crisis. However deep these impressions go, we want a larger God. It is not enough that God is Courage, Youth and Heroic Love. Our God must raise the fallen as well as lead the strong. He must redeem as well as rebuke. Mr. Wells gladly concedes that God may have means of access to those who seem hopeless

and useless to human judgment. There is more of God than Mr. Wells yet knows or sees. The vision he has received he communicates so vividly that the world would gain if he should e'er long see and know more.

Postscript.

This paper was written during the war, and is reprinted with very little change. Since it was written, Mr. Wells has published his *Outline of History*. His treatment of the figure of Jesus in the *Outline* is an advance on the attitude adopted in *God, the Invisible King*. He no longer accepts as approximately true, sentimental and conventional estimates of Jesus. He sees with his own eyes and realizes something of the strength of Jesus and something of the grandeur of His cause. "We are left . . . with the figure of a being, very human, very earnest and passionate, capable of swift anger, and teaching a new and simple and profound doctrine, namely, the universal loving Fatherhood of God and the coming of the Kingdom of Heaven." [1] The cry from the Cross is now felt to be impressive. "Towards the end of the long day of suffering this abandoned leader roused Himself to one supreme effort, cried out with a loud voice, "My God! My God! why hast Thou forsaken Me?" and leaving these words to echo down the ages, a perpetual riddle to the faithful, died." [2] Clearly this is the discovery of strength rather than weakness in the manner of the death of Jesus. Mr. Wells sees more in Jesus—more indeed

[1] *Outline of History*, p. 357. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 365.

than any of us can grasp. " This Galilean is too much for our small hearts." [1] But even now Mr. Wells does not apparently find in the Cross a revelation of Love's reality. The Cross is still incidental rather than fundamental.

[1] *Outline of History* p. 362.

G. BERNARD SHAW AND RELIGION

An American writer once hazarded the opinion that Bernard Shaw was an emissary of the devil, because he stated truth in such a provocative way that no one would listen to it thereafter. The familiar characteristics of Shaw as a writer do certainly prejudice the serious consideration of his views on religion. To shock the conventionalists is part of the main business of his life, and his handling of religion, as of other subjects, is calculated to shock. The mere introduction of wit into the discussion of ultimate beliefs appears flippant and irreverent to the orthodox, just as G. K. Chesterton's *Defence of Orthodoxy* seemed frivolous to a rationalist like Joseph McCabe. Perhaps even greater annoyance to sober-minded people is occasioned by Shaw's habitual inaccuracy and reckless inconsistency. One example from the Preface to *Androcles and the Lion* will serve to illustrate these traits. There he assures us that there is not one word of Pauline Christianity in the characteristic utterances of Jesus, and at the same time he bases what he imagines to be the teaching of Jesus about marriage on a sentence from the first letter to the Corinthians. He sums up the teaching of Jesus on this subject in this way: "Get rid of your family entanglements. . . . In the Kingdom of Heaven, which as aforesaid is within you, there is no marriage or giving in marriage, because you cannot devote your life to two divinities, God and

the person you are married to." It is characteristic of Shaw that he should base his view of the teaching of Jesus on marriage on 1 Corinthians vii. 33, and should pass by without comment the actual sayings of Jesus about divorce as recorded in Mark x. This casual treatment of evidence, which is always irritating, is particularly provocative when the subject is religion, and inclines the reader to shrug his shoulders and seek other teachers.

This effect of Shaw's mannerisms is unfortunate because he appears to us to be among the prophets. During the war, and since, he has developed the knack of saying fundamental Christian things in a very clear and simple way. For example, in his first tract on the war, he warned us that at the close we should be faced with this moral alternative: either we should say, "How shall we punish the Kaiser?" or "God forgive us all." The second is obviously the Christian alternative, and as a people we did not choose it. Again, in his articles on the Washington Conference, Shaw said: "There is only one thing that can prevent war, and that is conviction of sin. The Conference will not prevent it, because the delegates have no such conviction. Neither Mr. Hughes nor President Harding has ventured to say: 'War is a crime which we must expiate by extirpating it, for the plunder of the fallen, however disguised as reparation, indemnity, and the like, is theft, and has already brought on the starving people of the victorious nations all the evils of defeat.'" It is much to be regretted that the habit of discounting Shaw leads to a neglect of weighty utterances like these. Moreover, he has persistent views about religion which ought not to be dismissed without consideration.

That Shaw is not writing idly or at random might indeed be demonstrated by the measure of agreement between his Preface to *Back to Methuselah* and Bishop Gore's recent book *Belief in God.* The Bishop is convinced that there can be no real social recovery except through a general return to God, and Shaw is likewise convinced that "the revival of civilization after the war cannot be effected by artificial breathing." "The driving force of an undeluded popular consent is indispensable, and will be impossible until the statesman can appeal to the vital instincts of the people in terms of a common religion." The Bishop and the dramatist likewise agree in attributing religious doubt and confusion of mind in large measure to popular interpretations of Darwinism. Indeed, Shaw would apparently trace the whole catastrophe of the war to the influence of Darwinism, with its emphasis on the struggle for existence and the survival of the fittest as the law of life. But while Dr. Gore goes back to the Prophets and the New Testament for his belief in God, Shaw is more concerned to discover a religious faith that can interpret the idea of evolution He is inclined to identify his deity with Bergson's *élan vital*, and it is significant that Lavinia, the aristocratic Christian in *Androcles and the Lion*, does not so much put her trust in Jesus as express her confidence in Bergson. She claims to act under the influence of a life-force which bids her defy convention and authority. She is certainly the strangest and least historical, but most truly Shavian, among the early Christian martyrs described in Shaw's play.

Shaw's plea for a religious revival is, then, of a practical character. He perceives negatively the breakdown of religious faith under the impact of Darwinism

as leading to the collapse of civilization ; and positively, he notes that good-natured, unambitious men are cowards when they have no religion, and that the people cannot be raised to great heights without a religious impulse. What kind of religion does he himself believe in and offer to us ?

In the first place, it is fundamental to his interpretation of evolution itself that it witnesses to a supernatural, or at least a superhuman, will at work in the world. He believes in a God who is more than humanity. This was made clear in *The Showing Up of Blanco Posnet,* perhaps the most profoundly religious and most positively Christian of all his plays, and in consequence banned by the Censor as offensive to public morals. When Blanco Posnet is surprised into doing something decent at the risk of his life, he recognizes that there is a will at work in the world higher and other than his own. He states this in his own rough way, but the statement contains the foundation-truth of religion.

" What's this game that upsets our game ? For seems to me there's two games bein' played. One game is a rotten game that makes me feel I'm dirt and that you're all as rotten as me. T'other game may be a silly game, but it ain't rotten. . . . You bet He [God] didn't make us for nothing : and He wouldn't have made us at all if He could have done His work without us. By Gum, that must be what we're for ! He'd never have made us to be rotten drunken blackguards like me and good-for-nothing rips like Feeney. He made me because He had a job for me. He let me run loose till the job was ready : and then I had to come along and do it, hanging or no hanging. And I tell you it didn't feel rotten : it felt bully, just bully."

The life-force, then, according to Shaw, is in man, but also above and beyond him. This he brings out clearly in *Back to Methuselah*, as may be seen in the following passage :—

" The popular religions, disgraced by their opportunist cardinals and bishops, have been kept in credit by canonized saints whose secret was their conception of themselves as the instruments and vehicles of divine power and aspiration : a conception which at moments becomes an actual experience of ecstatic possession by that power. And above and below all have been millions of humble and obscure persons, sometimes totally illiterate, sometimes unconscious of having any religion at all, sometimes believing, in their simplicity, that the gods and temples and priests of their district stood for their instinctive righteousness, who have kept sweet the tradition that good people follow a light that shines within and above and ahead of them, that bad people care only for themselves, and that the good are saved and blessed and the bad damned and miserable."

It is significant that the light shines not only within, but above and ahead of the people who follow it, so that the life-force is at once, in technical language, immanent and transcendent. Shaw puts it even more emphatically in a paragraph on the flimsiness of civilization, where he says that " the power that produced man when the monkey was not up to the mark can produce a higher creature than man, if man does not come up to the mark. If man is to be saved, man must save himself." The assumption of the paragraph is that the power behind the world has purposes or a purpose of its own, and that only in the realization of such purpose does man find his true being.

The seriousness with which Shaw holds this view is apparent from the consistency with which he returns to it, and from his conviction that only along the lines of creative evolution can we interpret the problem of evil. " If all our calamities are either accidents or sincerely repented mistakes, there is no malice in the Cruelty of Nature and no Problem of Evil in the Victorian sense at all. The theology of the women who told us that they became atheists when they sat by the cradles of their children and saw them strangled by the hand of God is succeeded by the theology of Blanco Posnet, with his ' It was early days when He made the croup, I guess. It was the best He could think of then ; but when it turned out wrong on His hands He made you and me to fight the croup for Him.' " It is another corollary of this view of evolution that it throws all the emphasis on the Will. The process of evolution is not the outcome of the driving power of blind forces, but it is the conscious pursuit of ends or ideals. It is more than probable that Shaw's quarrels with the Neo-Darwinians is a misunderstanding. It is possible even that Shaw is quite in the wrong upon the scientific issues, and yet the claim that the future evolution of humanity depends on a willed change in men might be true. It is a pity that Shaw really ridicules his own idea by suggesting that the condition of human life which we need to change is the span of years allotted to man. His contention is that we do not live long enough to get wise. If we lived long enough, if by willing we could make three hundred years the normal span of human life, then he thinks something might be done for the salvaging of civilization. But this is a purely fantastic solution of the problem that is raised in the Preface. There is really

no hope for mankind in the advice to go back to Methuselah—not because the advice is impracticable, but because if we could, by willing or thinking, acquire the characteristic of longevity, there is no evidence that the centuries would bring wisdom. It is obvious that there cannot be a physiological solution of the moral problem of human progress ; and the new determination required of mankind is not that they make up their minds to live longer, but that they make up their minds to live in accordance with the teaching of Jesus. Shaw himself has urged this more than once, and his metabiological Pentateuch is either exquisite fooling or a counsel of despair.

For guidance in social reconstruction, Shaw does, as a matter of fact, look to the teaching of Jesus as he himself understands it. He has set forth his views of Christianity in great detail in his Preface to *Androcles and the Lion*. In that Preface he urged that we should give Christianity a trial, and he has recently reinforced the plea by pointing out, in agreement with " A. E.," that " the only person who has come out of the war with any intellectual credit is Jesus Christ." He sums up the teaching of Jesus in the following paragraphs :—

1. " The Kingdom of Heaven is within you. You are the son of God ; and God is the son of man. God is a spirit, to be worshipped in spirit and in truth, and not an elderly gentleman to be bribed and begged from. We are members one of another ; so that you cannot injure or help your neighbour without injuring or helping yourself. God is your father : you are here to do God's work ; and you and your father are one.

2. " Get rid of property by throwing it into the common stock. Dissociate your work entirely from money payments. If you let a child starve, you are

letting God starve. Get rid of all anxiety about to-morrow's dinner and clothes, because you cannot serve two masters: God and Mammon.

3. "Get rid of judges and punishment and revenge. Love your neighbour as yourself, he being a part of yourself. And love your enemies: they are your neighbours.

4. "Get rid of your family entanglements. Every mother you meet is as much your mother as the woman who bore you. Every man you meet is as much your brother as the man she bore after you. Don't waste your time at family funerals grieving for your relatives: attend to life, not to death: there are as good fish in the sea as ever came out of it, and better. In the Kingdom of Heaven, which, as aforesaid, is within you, there is no marriage nor giving in marriage, because you cannot devote your life to two divinities: God and the person you are married to."

It will be said that these propositions are more characteristic of Shaw than of the Gospel, and this is true, particularly of the fourth, which bears very little relation to anything that Jesus said or taught. Shaw is endeavouring to get support from the sayings of Jesus for the views he has expressed in the Preface to *Getting Married*. It is not surprising that the attempt is a failure. Apart from the fact already pointed out, that he has to fall back on St. Paul to get any colour for the view of marriage put forth in this paragraph, his statement of the teaching of Jesus on the subject is vitiated by his eliminating the idea of movement and crisis from the life and teaching of Christ. This consideration also affects his treatment of the points dealt with in paragraphs 2 and 3, the question of property, and the question of judgment and punish-

ment ; but here he is unquestionably in line with the natural emphasis of the Gospel records. The concern of many Christian people to give a punitive character to the terms of peace for the sake of the moral order is without any clear justification in the attitude of their Master. But the first proposition, the fundamental religious proposition, is obviously inadequate, on Shaw's own view of the relation of the life-force to men. Here he identifies God and humanity in a way that is certainly not true to the Gospel and equally false to his own conception of a superhuman will at work in the process of evolution. In consequence of his inadequate statement of the fundamental truth of the religious life, he cannot do justice to the religious significance of Jesus. He accepts a view of Christ that closely resembles that of Renan, to the effect that Jesus, having shown Himself a wise, practical teacher, suddenly entertained the delusion that He was the Christ, and under that delusion courted and suffered a cruel execution. This dismissal of the Messianic claim as delusion is really not justified in the light of Shaw's own account of creative evolution. There is no reason in the world, from Shaw's point of view, why the new humanity should not begin with Jesus, or why Jesus Himself should not be aware of this, or why Shaw should not acknowledge it.

The real reason why Shaw cannot accept the claim of Jesus is bound up with his quarrel with the idea of atonement. The assumption is that the claim of Jesus involves the idea of a dying God who gives His life for the world, and this seems to him to be salvationism on the cheap. It means being pardoned for nothing. He imagines that the effect of St. Paul's teaching, Luther's and John Wesley's, was to make it easy for

men to sin, by supposing that they could put all the burden of their sins on Christ ; and for himself Shaw claims the right to refuse atonement. " It is not good for me to be able to load a scapegoat with my sins. I should be less careful how I committed them if I knew they would cost me nothing." Some popular statements of the doctrine of the atonement are open to Shaw's criticism, but his treatment alike of the religious instinct behind sacrifice, and of the attitude of St. Paul and of Luther, is singularly superficial. He simply does not understand them. It is easy enough to prefer to retain one's full moral responsibility when one does not realize how great that responsibility is ; but men like Paul and Luther, who have seen deeper into the nature of sin, are not so confident of their ability to pay their moral debts, and they also realize that the fact of vicarious suffering is unescapable. And the doctrine of the atonement that Shaw derides has, even in its crude forms, brought home to many men the fact that their sins have cost other people something. This consciousness has issued in greater sensitiveness about wrong-doing than is characteristic of those who imagine, like Shaw, that they pay the price of their own sin. It is because his treatment of atonement is so shallow that he is unable to do justice to the religious significance of Jesus.

To compare Shaw with Wells is inevitable. Both are concerned to give a religious interpretation to evolution, but whereas Shaw finds, in the conception of the life-force, a clue to the problem of evil, and feels no great gulf fixed between nature and man, to Wells the problem of evil is still so oppressive that he takes refuge in the hypothesis of two Gods, one the leader of humanity, and the other the inscrutable power

behind the physical universe. But their agreements are more significant than their divergencies. Among the signs of the times, few are more encouraging than this—that two of our leading literary men have become convinced of the need of religious revival. However defective their respective creeds may be, it is worth noting that both are convinced that the religion of the future must discover the meaning of the process of history, and will base its interpretation of history on the teaching of Jesus.

THE NEXT REVIVAL OF RELIGION

THE war, it was truly said, found us in great poverty towards God. The situation since the war has but emphasized the need of a religious revival. By many the downfall of Western civilization is thought to be imminent, and though men's fears may be exaggerated, it is difficult to see how disaster is to be avoided in Europe without the enthusiasm of a renewed faith In one direction or another, we see flashes of revival. Communism itself possesses religious fervour like the fanaticism of the early days of the French Revolution. But the parallel is too close, and the destructive character of Communism too obvious. Communism based on the gospel according to Marx contains no real hope for mankind. The movement towards reunion among Christians was and is surely a movement of the spirit. Yet it has not gone far enough, and already it seems to be halted by renewed loyalties to those sectional interests which, rightly or wrongly, recent suggestions towards reunion are supposed to threaten. At the moment the most vigorous revival movements seem to be of a strictly limited character. They are revivals in the literal sense of the word—attempts to reanimate old views. There is, for example, in many quarters a return to the religions of authority. Fundamentalism is the attempt to revive religion by galvanizing into life the old dogma of the inerrant and infallible Bible. Alongside of it we have

the revival of millenarian hopes and speculations. Elsewhere we find a renewed interest in spiritualism. We can, then, discern a quickening movement in the realm of religion, though if it be a genuine tide of the spirit, many appear bent on pouring new wine into old wineskins.

It is hazardous to speculate on the subject of spiritual renewal, but in the light both of present needs and of past history it is safe to assert that none of these existing movements constitute the revival we should look for. No fervid reaffirmation of old shibboleths, whether they be the threadbare dogmas of Karl Marx or the presuppositions either of Catholicism or of the older Evangelicalism, can really meet the demands of the present situation. No return to old standards, and no mere continuation of the work of great leaders like Moody and Sankey, will issue in the revival we need to-day. The world requires a revival of Christianity comparable to the Reformation itself or to the Evangelical Revival taken as a whole. The study of these great movements may not enable us to say when and where the next revival will begin, but it will throw light on some characteristics which will mark the true revival when it comes. Three such characteristics may be distinguished and separately described though they are not separable the one from the other.

In the first place, both the Reformation and the Evangelical Revival had some positive relation to the tendencies of thought in the ages to which they severally belong. The connection between the Reformation and the Renaissance is at least as obvious and important as their divergence. Up to a point, the two movements reinforce one another. If the Renaissance demands that inquiry be untrammelled by tradition

and asserts the sovereign rights of reason, the Reformation is built on the duty of the individual conscience to stand alone, if need be, even against Pope and Council. The right and duty of private judgment are involved in both movements. The men of the Renaissance and the men of the Reformation alike maintained the excellence of ordinary human life, though the first laid stress on the actual and the second on the potential goodness of everyday existence in the world. Sohm rightly says of the Reformation: "Against the mediæval ascetic ideal of renunciation there appeared a new ideal of life, which was akin to the Renaissance, in so far as it inclined to the world, recognized and comprehended it, but which was to fill the world, not with the ideals of Humanism, but with the ideals of Christianity." [1] The Humanist and the Reformer were agreed in their detestation of monasticism. That the Reformation corrected all that was mistaken and evil in the Renaissance or that it accepted and developed all that was good in the sister movement, we cannot affirm; but that the Reformation stood in some positive fruitful relation to the Renaissance, and was not simply hostile or indifferent to it, we cannot deny. The case is not really different with the Wesleyan revival or the Oxford Movement. "It may seem paradoxical to say it, but it is true that the spirit of the Methodist Movement is the same spirit as that which inspired the French Revolution: that in many respects it did for England what the Revolution did for France. It emancipated the individual, it represented the principle of equality and taught men the meaning of brotherhood." [2] John

[1] *Outlines of Church History*, E.T., p. 159.
[2] *Bartlet and Carlyle*, p. 547.

Wesley, like Luther, embodied in his religious faith not a little of the spirit of his age. If Wesley unconsciously provided a religious counterpart to the watchword of the Revolution, Newman consciously found a religious significance in the Reaction. The Oxford Movement in its emphasis alike on discipline and on the Church entered a protest against the Revolutionary assertion of individual rights. But the Oxford Movement was more than a reaction. In its second and later phases it has formed a natural alliance with Socialism, and striven to impregnate an excessive individualism with a true community sense. Here, too, the religious movement is found to be responsive to the aspirations and thought of the time.

It is difficult, then, to resist the conclusion that the next revival of Christianity will show the same characteristic. Any religious movement which ignores or defies the thought of the modern world will not prove to be the revival we need. It is asserted that big business in America is financing revivalism in the hope of countering Socialism. Billy Sunday's converts are reported to desert their trade unions. If this is true, such revivalism, however excellent its results may be from the point of view either of the individual convert or of employers of labour, is not the revival of Christianity for which the world waits. Many people are praying for a revival as a bulwark against Bolshevism. Now the revival when it comes will certainly render Bolshevism negligible, but it will as certainly not be an anti-Bolshevik movement. It will disarm Bolshevism because its leaders will have a deeper sense of social responsibility and a truer doctrine of society than the Bolsheviks possess. Again, we may be sure that a living reinterpretation of Christianity will come

to terms with the basal truths of the modern world-outlook. H. G. Wells and G. B. Shaw are true prophets at least in this, that they perceive that a living religious faith can neither deny nor ignore Evolution, but must interpret it. If Christianity is to revive, it must give meaning to the long, costly process by which men have been led or pushed on to their present stage of development. This does not mean that Christianity has to be whittled down to suit the preferences or preoccupations of the man of to-day. The leaders of the next revival will care very little about being up to date, but they will be very sensitive to the duties which God is laying on the conscience and to the truths which God is forcing on the consciousness of the modern world.

In the second place, the great revivals of the past achieved great social and political results. The Reformation, especially as disciplined by Calvin, tended to transform the family, the State, and industry. In each direction the value of its influence may be questioned. Anti-Puritanism, often ill-informed, is still popular. The reality and depth of the Puritan influence cannot be doubted. The Evangelical Revival carried to a successful issue the movement to abolish the slave trade. It powerfully stimulated public charity, and probably its most important contribution to social progress will be found on the mission-field. If we cannot point to any one definite achievement of the Oxford Movement, it cannot be denied that it is the heir to the Christian Socialists and has done much to awaken the social conscience. There can be little doubt that the next revival will enable us to face and accomplish some of the big tasks in reconstruction before which we hesitate to-day. It will undoubtedly

re-create the world of international politics, and its leader might be a statesman who staked his all on Christian principles in international relations.

The third characteristic of great revivals which calls for comment is that they involve a searching criticism of a previously existing orthodoxy. The word "involve" is used advisedly, because such movements do not begin in negative criticism. They are based on a vivid apprehension of something central in Christianity, and this fresh grasp of a vital truth involves a letting-go of less vital traditions. And often the new vision can only be established by breaking up the old orthodoxy. Luther did not set out to criticize the mediæval Church, but he found he could not escape the necessity of criticism. The liberty of a Christian man into which he had entered compelled him to discard and to attack much of mediæval Christianity. Anyone who shared or who even understood the communion with a gracious God in which Luther found the secret of the Christian life knew that for him the mediæval conceptions of sacramental grace and Church authority were no longer valid. Luther's spiritual discovery inevitably shifted the focus of Christianity, for all who could appreciate it. Similarly, Wesley did not set out to criticize the Calvinist tradition, but he had to break with it before he could preach salvation freely to all men. The Wesleyan revival was the first great breach in the systematic Calvinism which dominated Dissenting Christianity in England from the middle of the seventeenth century. The Wesleys could not avoid controversy with Toplady. They had to challenge the doctrine of predestination and call in question "the hateful, horrible decree." The Oxford Movement hardly showed the same

vigorous independence in theology. It discarded much of the Evangelical theology, but tried to hark back to patristic standards in theology—a hopeless anachronism. Perhaps for this reason it has not proved to be so profound and invigorating a renewal of Christianity as the Evangelical revival itself. Yet it too loosened the hold of an orthodoxy, even while it sought to revive an orthodoxy which belonged irretrievably to a still remoter past. The history of the next revival will probably resemble that of the Reformation and the Evangelical revival. It will spring from a renewed understanding of the heart of Christianity—a renewed loyalty to the central figure in Christianity, which will make clear the non-essential character of much that men assert to be essential still. The revival will bring men back to the Bible and to the Church, but it will shatter the legends of verbal inspiration and infallible authority. It will be spoken against by the Fundamentalists, because it will shake their sandy foundations, and by the Ecclesiastics, because it will rebuke that overvaluing of details of ritual and order which hinders Christian fellowship. But it will so exalt Christ before the nations that they see in Him the wisdom of God and forsake the wisdom of this world. The day cannot be far off when the prophets of the next revival will be made manifest.

QUAKERISM: AN HISTORICAL SURVEY

MANKIND may never reach Lord Acton's ideal stage in the development of historical science when the life of Luther will be substantially the same whether written by a Catholic or a Protestant. The attainment of that stage may even be undesirable if it be foreshadowed in the cool impartiality of some modern historians. The writing of history is still, and must ever be, an art which depends much on sympathy. When Robert Southey announced to a Methodist his intention of writing the life of John Wesley, his Methodist acquaintance remonstrated in the words, "Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep." Similarly, though less bluntly, the Quaker poet, Bernard Barton, questioned the wisdom of Southey's projected work on George Fox and the Quakers. He doubted whether Southey was sufficiently appreciative of the central Quaker principle to be qualified for his task. Both Methodist and Quaker may have been unjust to Robert Southey, and yet right in general as to the essential equipment of the historian. Some link of sympathy between the historian and his subject usually underlies great historical writing.

The very fact that historical inquiry is seldom undertaken, and still more rarely carried to a successful issue unless the subject appeals to the historian's admiration, makes the observance of the discipline

involved in Lord Acton's ideal the more imperative. Wherever our feelings are engaged, the service of truth becomes more exacting, particularly when we are dealing with the history of religion. In a letter to Mary Gladstone, Lord Acton impressively urges this point : " To be sincere a man must continually grub up the stumps planted by all manner of unrevised influence. The subtlest of all such influences is not family or college or country or class or party, but religious antagonism."

It is superfluous to remark that the authors of the standard history of Quakerism which was planned by John Wilhelm Rowntree and which has recently been brought to a conclusion by the publication of two volumes on *The Later Periods of Quakerism*, are fully equipped on the side of sympathetic understanding. They have not concealed their pride in unfolding a story of which any Church might excusably be proud, while their hope for the future of the Society of Friends is equally undisguised. It is almost as superfluous to comment on the technical equipment and personal gifts which Dr. Rufus M. Jones and William Charles Braithwaite have brought to their task. Dr. Rufus Jones writes with authority on the philosophy and psychology of religion. The clearness and ease of his style are such as almost to conceal from the delighted reader the thoroughness of the historian's researches and the depth of his religious philosophy. The two volumes on *The Beginnings of Quakerism* and *The Second Period of Quakerism* by W. C. Braithwaite make only too clear the loss to historical studies involved in his death in the spring of last year. It may suffice to characterize his work if we say that he is not unworthy to be ranked with two other Quaker bankers

who won distinction as historians—Thomas Hodgkin and Frederic Seebohm. The subject of which he treats will not attract the general reader to the same extent as the history of *Italy and her Invaders* or the volume on *The Oxford Reformers* attracts him. But those who take up Braithwaite's narrative will find in it the mastery of original sources, the soundness of judgment and much of the vigour and charm of style which we associate with the work of the other Quaker historians.

The essential greatness, however, of the historical work before us lies not in the enthusiastic interest of the writers in their theme, not in the excellence of their researches, not in the readableness of their narratives, but in the frankness of their criticism of the Quaker Movement, in their attempt to relate it to other movements, earlier and contemporary, in their readiness to acknowledge debt and admit defect. In other words, they have reached a high standard of sincerity, and in this respect, as in many others, their work is a model of what a history of a particular Church should be. This will be easily apparent from a brief review of the leading features of the story they unfold.

The actual history of Quakerism is prefaced by two volumes, *Studies in Mystical Religion* and *Spiritual Reformers of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, both from the pen of Dr. Rufus Jones. This procedure may seem at first to need justification, since nothing is more characteristic of George Fox and the first Quakers than their sense of making an entirely new start. Fox claimed to have received his gospel by inward revelation. He felt himself to be the apostle of a new reformation. By apostleship he meant that

his commission and his message came to him direct from God, not by men or through a man. And he asserted his apostleship not querulously or diffidently, not boastfully or jealously, but simply and without affectation, assuming at once a privilege and a responsibility. From his Journal he scarcely seems to be aware that any have proclaimed the doctrine of the inner light in the century preceding him, and he certainly is not conscious of any debt to any human teacher. He traces every discovery of truth to the leading of Christ within.

Nor had Fox's followers any doubt as to the sincerity and validity of his claim. William Penn said of him that as to man he was an original, being no man's copy. To devote two volumes to the expression of the same or parallel doctrines in earlier or contemporary Church history is to take the reader a good way behind the account which the first Quakers gave of their own movement. But the justification, and even the necessity, for this wider survey are not hard to discern. If we are to understand Fox himself, and still more if we are to understand his appeal, we must know the extent to which others had been groping after or even actually expressing the truth of God's presence in the hearts of men which he set out to preach. From the standpoint of modern psychology Dr. Rufus Jones describes George Fox as belonging to a distinctly psychopathic type. In his youth Fox passed through a period of spiritual conflict and mental anguish before he found the truth that set him free. In his Journal for the years 1643 to 1647 he describes his distress, and some of his pathological symptoms point to a psychical constitution of an unstable sort. Indeed, Dr. Rufus Jones suggests that if he had not

found near the end of his adolescent period an organizing, centralizing and constructive power, he might have become the victim of hysteria. Throughout his life George Fox was subject to trance-experience, and was credited with telepathic powers. But this very constitution Dr. Rufus Jones would hold to be characteristic of geniuses or creative leaders. "They are always persons who are acutely sensitive to the spirit of their time, the subtle currents and inward strivings of their period. They are as responsive to group-tendencies as a sounding-box of a musical instrument to vibrations: they are *suggestible* to a degree that ordinary thick-skinned mortals have no notion of." [1]

This psychological analysis helps to explain why Fox appealed to some of the groups of his own time and why he was unconscious of the direct influence of any human teaching or aspiration. The germ of his gospel may very well have come into his mind either from some Familist source or more probably from the writings of Jacob Boehme which began to circulate in England about 1645. In any case, there were groups of seekers scattered through England, and especially numerous in Westmorland, who were looking for just such a message as came to George Fox. The two introductory volumes, especially the second, describe a spiritual atmosphere surcharged with the ideas that formed the Quaker gospel. How the central idea of the inner light first entered the consciousness of Fox we shall probably never know. Probably he himself never knew, and could not have told us. How closely his message was related to one

[1] *Beginnings of Quakerism*, p. xxvii.

side of the thought and need of his age these volumes make abundantly clear.

They also serve another important purpose. When Cardinal Newman was devising tests of a true development of original Christianity, he put forward chronic continuance as a seventh and final test. A faithful development is marked by duration. Heresies and errors flourish for a moment. It is true that the process of decay is sometimes a long one, but in the end they pass at a breath. "Thus we see opinions, usages and systems which are of venerable and imposing aspect, but which have no soundness within them, and keep together from a habit of consistence or from dependence on political institutions. . . . And then at length perhaps they go off suddenly and die out under the first rough influence from without." [1] The history of Quakerism as a distinct movement is not sufficiently long, and its vitality, though real, not sufficiently abundant, to satisfy fully this test of duration. But these studies in mystical religion compel us to recognize in Quakerism one of a series of resurgences of something which may be presumed essential to Christianity.

Perhaps chronic reappearance is a more important test than chronic continuance. Did not John Stuart Mill suggest that this was one of the main advantages which truth has in conflict with the forces from time to time ranged against it? Its defeats are temporary, its resurrection certain. Yet such a test is of very little value. Errors die hard and reappear with subtle transformations. It does, however, strengthen the claim of Quakerism to consideration, that the movement is not isolated in history. It, too, can point to

[1] *Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine*, p. 92.

a kind of apostolic succession, and the many attempts to formulate and live by its principles offer some presumption in favour of its truth. A penetrating observation which L. T. Hobhouse makes on the doctrine of non-resistance in particular may hold good of Quakerism in general. The doctrine of non-resistance, he says, "however one-sided and inapplicable to the affairs of men, enshrines the profound truth that moral influence is distinct from and superior to physical compulsion: that force, however necessary, in immediate exigencies, settles nothing in the end, but is a menace to the moral balance of the society and of the individual that employs it: that men are capable of being influenced, not only by retaliation, but also, and more profoundly, by the deliberate refusal to retaliate. The system of Quietism gave an extreme expression to these truths. *The world will always reject its ideas, and will always be haunted by them until the time comes when, disregarding the extravagances of form in which they are uttered, it begins to ask itself in sober earnestness what truth they contain.*" [1] If Quakerism cannot substantiate all its original claims, at least it embodies some of those truths that perpetually haunt the conscience of the world and of the Church.

These anticipations of and parallels to the Quaker position do not explain the enthusiasm with which Fox was received in the time of the Commonwealth. It is not easy from a modern standpoint to see why the original Quaker message was welcomed as a gospel on the one hand or why it was denounced as a dangerous heresy on the other. To-day if men admit the idea of God at all, the assertion of God's presence in

[1] *Morals in Evolution*, vol. ii. p. 117.

humanity offers no particular difficulty. To say that there is something of God in every man does not now sound revolutionary. But in the time of Cromwell the doctrine of the saving inner light in every man came as tidings of great joy to thousands, and filled many others with the direst misgivings for the future of religion. The appeal of Fox and the reaction against him can only be understood in the light of the religious condition of England at the close of the Civil War.

The military triumph of Puritanism was to some extent its undoing. On the death of the king, the Puritans found themselves the dominant party in a national situation which they could not really control. They had only achieved success by the aid first of the Scots and then of Cromwell and his Ironsides. The support of the Scots had been secured by promising an ecclesiastical settlement along the lines of the reformation in Scotland. Such a settlement went beyond the desires of English Puritans. The services of Cromwell and the Ironsides who were mostly Independents brought a further complication into the situation. For the Independents wanted toleration, and toleration was even more distasteful to the Puritan than a Scottish reformation. Cromwell had made himself the indispensable autocrat. As such, he freed the Parliament from its obligations to the Scottish covenanters, but forced them to make concessions to the Independents.

In consequence, the licence in venting new and strange opinions which prevailed owing to the practical breakdown of authority during the war was not effectively restrained during the Commonwealth. It was a golden opportunity for the sectaries, and they

made the most of it. Calvinism had to struggle intellectually and morally for its existence against a crowd of novel and conflicting interpretations of Christianity. There followed an extraordinary embarrassment of riches in religious life and thought, so that not a few individuals entirely lost their bearings. Many were asking for a simple clue to the chaotic maze of religious speculation in which they were wandering. Then Puritanism itself as a religious system did not come through the war untarnished. There was a marked decay in its religious fervour, and in its moral prestige and sensitiveness. Some of the finer spirits, like Richard Baxter, felt and recorded this lowering of the pulse and coarsening of the fibre of Puritanism. Those who had been dissatisfied with Puritanism before the war found their dissatisfaction increased rather than diminished by the issue of the conflict. Then, as in later wars, men talked of a failure of Christianity, and there were many in England who, like Fox, found their central religious problem not in the question of personal salvation, but in the question of the apparent powerlessness of traditional Christianity to create a regenerate society. The condition of the Puritan movement convinced such men that war and political intrigue could not advance the cause of true religion, and that some new principle must be tried if progress was to be made.

The message of Fox appealed in particular to those who were bewildered by sectarian controversies and dissatisfied with Puritanism, which seemed to have become a form of religious knowledge without the power of true religion. The experience of one typical convert to Quakerism will serve to illustrate the conditions which predisposed many to listen to Fox.

The religious pilgrimage of Mary Proud is thus described in *The Beginnings of Quakerism*: "In 1641, a gentlewoman of Puritan convictions, named Mary Proud, married Sir William Springett, a young man of twenty, who shared her zeal. They refused the use of a ring, and during their short married life scrupled many things then in use amongst those who were counted honest people, as, for instance, singing David's Psalms in metre, and when, like others, they tore out of their Bibles the Common Prayer and forms of prayer at the end of the book, they tore out also the singing Psalms as the inventions of vain poets. They were also brought off from the Bread and Wine, and, looking into the Independent way of worship, saw death in it, nor did baptism with water answer the cry of their hearts. At this time, about the year 1643, her husband died, and when their child was born Mary Springett would not allow her to be baptized, though Puritan preachers were sent to persuade her. 'Through this,' she says, 'I waded, after some time, but soon after this I went from the simplicity into notions, and I changed my ways often from one notion to another, not finding satisfaction.' She had been a Puritan, zealous in what were called the 'duties,' keeping the Sabbath, fasting often, praying in private thrice a day, hearing sermons and 'lectures' daily, and reading much in scripture. 'I was so vehement in prayer,' she writes, 'that I chose the more remote places to pray in, that I might not be heard to pray, and could not but be loud in the earnest pouring out of my soul.' Now, in her weariness of heart, she became disgusted with all religious exercises, and abandoned their use, both in her family and in private. She consorted with persons of no religion,

and grew to loathe outward profession; and in this restless state let in every sort of notions that rose in that day, and tried in turn to get good out of them, but only sorrow and trouble were the end of all, till she came to the conclusion that though God and His truth existed, they were not known to any on earth, and so gave up the search in despair. A time of frivolity followed, 'carding and dancing, singing and frequenting music meetings,' but with much trouble of heart. She believed that there was no revelation since the Apostles' days—nothing that she knew to be of God so certainly that she could shed her blood in defence of it. Once, watching the vanity of a Lord Mayor's Show, she asked a Puritan bystander, 'What benefit have we by all this bloodshed, and Charles's being kept out of the nation, seeing all these follies are again allowed?' He answered, none that he knew of except the enjoyment of their religion, to which she rejoined that that was a benefit to those who had a religion, but none to her. Through all her darkness, however, she held a trust in the Lord, even when she owned herself to have no religion which she could call true: she could not, indeed, call God 'Father,' but cried to Him as her Creator, and when melted into tears at such times supposed it must be some influence from the planets that made her tender, for she could not own anything in her to be of God. In this state she married her second husband, Isaac Penington, in 1654, a man like herself, 'who saw the deceit of all notions, and lay as one who refused to be comforted by any appearance of religion.' A few years later both husband and wife found in the Quaker experience of an indwelling Christ that for which their souls had been thirsting." [1]

[1] *Beginnings of Quakerism*, pp. 13–15.

It will be apparent from this instance that Quakerism restored the reality of religion to those who felt that in striving for religious liberty they had lost religion itself; that it replaced elaborate creeds by a simple experimental truth; and that through accepting it those who were wearied with controversy found themselves pavilioned from the strife of tongues. Quakerism, especially Quaker worship on the basis of silence, has had this appeal throughout its history. Thus Caroline Stephen, in the period of fresh religious controversy initiated by the discoveries of Darwin, found in Friends' meeting the refuge and the healing which she needed. "What I felt I wanted in a place of worship was a refuge, or at least the opening of a doorway towards the refuge, from doubts and controversies, not a fresh encounter with them. . . . It seems to me that nothing but silence can heal the wounds made by disputations in the region of the unseen." [1] So in the seventeenth century, though Friends did not by any means escape or even seek to avoid controversy, yet the attraction of their position was that it placed men beyond most of the current controversies. Quakerism set men free from Puritan theology. It also liberated them from the morbid self-consciousness towards which Puritanism tended. Fox turned the thoughts of his hearers away from their sins to the light that dwelt in them and showed them their sins. In thus concentrating attention on positive good, Fox has much support in modern psychology. Historically, this aspect of Quakerism saved many from despair.

How, it may be asked, did the gospel of Fox differ from previous doctrines of the inner light? If it

[1] *Later Periods of Quakerism*, p. 968.

differed at all, the difference must be found in the closeness of his attention to the practical consequences of his principle and in his resolute endeavour to build up a Christian fellowship on its basis. In other words, he grasped more firmly than most the social applications and the social significance of the doctrine of the inner light.

It has been said that the mystics have saved religion and destroyed the Church, and it may be affirmed with truth that a long succession of mystics have been in conflict with institutional Christianity, while those whose mysticism has not clashed with institutionalism have yet been unable to affirm the type of authority set up in the older Churches. But if Fox is to be classed with the mystics, he cannot rightly be accused of destroying the Church. In contrast with the Ranters and others who claimed to follow the inner light, he perceived that no man could honestly claim the guidance of God for himself without recognizing it in others. To believe in the inner light meant to believe in a fellowship and to accept its obligations. Fox had to face extreme individualism among his own followers, but he himself believed that in setting himself to organize the Society of Friends in 1666 he was initiating a development in strict conformity with the principles he had been proclaiming for nearly twenty years.

George Fox, like John Wesley, was great not only as a prophet but also as an organizer. And the kind of organization he founded is extraordinarily true to the ideas of his gospel. The somewhat cynical observation that organizations seem designed for the painless extinction of the ideas of their founders is less applicable to the Society of Friends than to many

other institutions. The Society of Friends is thus Fox's real achievement. He showed that it was possible to combine the deepest respect for individual personality with a very close and even highly organized fellowship. Those who accepted the leadership of George Fox found themselves committed to a somewhat unconventional and yet simple way of living, and united in a society through which they hoped to transform the world.

The early successes of the Quaker evangelists were very striking. By the time of the Restoration of the Stuart monarchy there were some 60,000 Friends in England, "drawn principally from the trading and yeoman classes, though there were also some artisans and labourers, a fair number of merchants, and a few gentry." To-day the membership of the Society in England is about 20,000. We have seen some of the reasons of the response to its appeal. We must now examine the causes of the halt or decline of the movement. These latter have been a matter of concern to the Society in recent generations, and they are fully discussed in the history. At the very beginning of the movement the Quaker appeal was limited by certain transient features. The early Friends were carried to a dangerous pitch of enthusiasm. The extravagance of James Nayler in riding into Bristol in 1656 in imitation of Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem was really not so alien from the temper of early Quakerdom as Fox's emphatic condemnation of him would suggest. W. C. Braithwaite prints a letter of Margaret Fell, of Swarthmore, "which shows the excesses of language into which ardent devotees might be led." One sentence may illustrate the nature of these excesses. She writes thus to Fox on behalf of

the Swarthmore group: "Our dear father in the Lord . . . we thy babes with one consent being gathered together in the power of the Spirit, thou being present with us, our souls doth thirst and languish after thee and doth challenge that right that we have in thee, O thou bread of life, without which bread our souls will starve." [1] There is in this a very dangerous identification of Fox with Christ, parallel to the case of Nayler. Nayler suffered a cruel and unjust penalty by special resolution of Parliament. His case became notorious, and men were repelled by a movement which seemed to be extravagant to the verge of blasphemy. Another characteristic of the first Quakers was their confident and often abusive criticism of opponents, especially ministers. Unfortunately, their attacks were frequently directed against really good men, like Richard Baxter, who legitimately complained of the railing words in which Quakers indulged, like drunkards or common scolds, and who with some justification suggested that "no servant of Christ who hath learnt of Him to be meek and lowly can believe, if he be well in his wits, that this is the language of the Spirit of Christ." W. C. Braithwaite's treatment of this point is typical of his fair-mindedness. He says:—

"It is, unfortunately, the case that the intense conviction and the faithfulness which gave Friends the courage to publish their message through storms of persecution were also expressed in unwarrantable interference with the religious practices of others and in harsh and uncharitable condemnation of their lives. The opposers of Friends were often equally unrestrained in their language, and in addition enforced

[1] *Beginnings of Quakerism*, p. 105.

their words with the iron mace of an intolerant law. Some of them poisoned the wells of controversy with the lies of personal slander. The verbal violence of Friends was singularly free both from the spirit of persecution and from the filth of private scandal. Its excesses sprang not from bigotry or malice, but from the honest-hearted conviction of half-educated men who were the champions of a great truth.

"We deplore these early polemics, yet we should do well to recognize that this insobriety of speech was incidental to an age when religious passion was convulsing Europe. . . ." [1]

These two elements of extravagance in early Quakerism ceased to determine public opinion towards the movement by the time that William Penn became one of its leaders. His adhesion in itself was a kind of guarantee of respectability. But the suspicion and jealousy of other Christian bodies continued, largely because Quakerism grew at their expense. As we have seen, men passed from Puritanism and Independency to Quakerism, and from among the Baptists came many good Quakers. Consequently the relation of Quakerism to other Christian bodies was not unlike the relation of the early Christian Church to the Jewish missions in the Roman Empire. The first Christian missionaries entered the synagogues of the dispersion and carried off the best proselytes. Similarly, the Quakers were held to be preying on other denominations. This fact accounts for some of the prejudice their movement encountered, and for the isolated position among Nonconformists which they tended to hold.

But other factors must be taken into consideration

[1] *Beginnings of Quakerism*, p. 284

if we are to explain the arrest of the movement. The long and costly fight for toleration in the time of Charles II absorbed the energies of Friends. Admittedly they bore the brunt of the two periods of persecution, 1662–8, 1670–3. They suffered heavily. Their financial losses were considerable, and were the least part of their troubles. Most of their best leaders spent many years in prison, and not a few of them died there. We have only to reckon up the years of imprisonment in the life of George Fox or Isaac Penington to realize the strain of the conflict. The Quakers won the battle of toleration in this country, but they won it at a price. The Society came through the trial with a desire for rest, and intent on consolidating its position rather than on undertaking new campaigns. It must also be remembered that after William Penn acquired the colony of Pennsylvania in 1681 large numbers of Friends, especially the more adventurous, left England. The Quakers in America, who number more than 100,000, are the real descendants of the first 60,000, as well as the smaller Society in England. Quakerism in England entered the eighteenth century impoverished in numbers and personnel by persecution and emigration.

Other influences hastened the numerical decline of the Society in the eighteenth century. The atmosphere of the century itself was unfavourable towards religious enthusiasm and mystical religion. Friends themselves developed their idiosyncrasies of speech and dress, and insisted on their special testimonies against oaths and tithes and the like, in such a way as to make their practices and tenets the badges of a peculiar people. In this connection the history of the Quaker dress is perhaps of special interest. As the Society developed

the more strictly did they insist on simplicity and uniformity of dress. It is not true, as an American writer has suggested, that Fox designed a form of dress for both sexes, and set the example of wearing it himself. His famous leather garments were chosen for durability, and not as a model for his followers. But from the first Quakers discarded superfluous ornament, especially ribbons, in their clothing, and the supervision of dress became a serious part of their discipline. Some, however, of the early Friends realized the danger of this tendency towards strict outward uniformity. Margaret Fell, who was married to George Fox in 1669, in her old age protested against the narrowness and strictness that were entering among Friends. She felt that they were drifting into Jewism. One of her letters of 1698 contains this fine passage on the attempt to regularize the cut and colour of Quaker clothing:—

"But Christ Jesus saith, That we must take no thought what we shall eat or what we shall drink or what we shall put on; but bids us consider the lilies, how they grow in more royalty than Solomon. But, contrary to this, we must not look at no colours, nor make anything that is changeable colours, as the hills are, nor sell them, nor wear them. But we must be all in one dress and one colour.

"This is a silly, poor gospel. It is more fit for us to be covered with God's eternal Spirit and clothed with His eternal Light, which leads us and guides us into righteousness; and to live righteously and justly and holily in this present evil world. This is the clothing that God puts on us, and likes, and will bless. This will make our light to shine forth before men . . . for we have God for our Teacher; and we have His

promise and His doctrine; and we have the apostles' practice in their day and generation; and we have God's Holy Spirit to lead us and guide us; and we have the blessed Truth that we are made partakers of to be our practice. . . .

"Friends, we have one God, and one mediator betwixt God and man—the man Christ Jesus. Let us keep to Him, or we are undone.

"This is not delightful to me, that I have this occasion to write to you; for wheresoever I saw it appear I have stood against it several years; and now I dare neglect it no longer. For I see that our blessed, precious, holy Truth, that has visited [us] from the beginning, is kept under; and these silly, outside, imaginary practices is coming up, and practised with great zeal, which hath often grieved my heart." [1]

It is pleasant to know that Margaret Fox was a true interpreter of her husband on this issue, for he did not scruple to buy her some scarlet cloth for a cloak while on one of his many journeys from home. But the tendency towards uniformity became too strong, and the curious anomaly resulted that a form of Christianity which set out to emphasize the inward became identified with a particular colour—grey; with a particular bonnet and shawl for women; with a particular collarless coat for men. The essence of Quakerism was held to be its uniform. That the old Quaker dress had a certain charm about it is undeniable. Charles Lamb's tribute to the troops of the shining ones who whiten the easterly streets of the metropolis at Whitsun—"every Quakeress is a lily"—is sincere and deserved. Yet it was easier to admire

[1] *The Second Period of Quakerism*, pp. 518, 519.

the troops of the shining ones than to join them. Many ladies must have been glad that some women adopted this dress without feeling in the least inclined to turn Quaker themselves. And all the while the real meaning of Quakerism was being obscured by the prominence of the dress. Not many critics of Quakerism have shared the insight of M. Raoul Allier, who has seen that the Quakers may be laying aside their traditional garb to-day in obedience to the same spirit which led them to cultivate simplicity in the first instance. In any case, their peculiarities of dress and manner tended to keep Quakers apart from other people without adding to the attractiveness of their fellowship. An even more disastrous mistake in discipline thinned the ranks of the Society, especially in the nineteenth century. Up to 1859, Friends made it a condition of membership in their Society that Friends should only marry Friends. Any man or woman who married a non-Friend was disowned, i.e. declared no longer a member of the Society. John Stevenson Rowntree found in this factor alone the chief cause in the numerical decline of the Society of Friends.

" A careful analysis of marriage statistics leads him to the conclusion that fully one-third of all members of the Society who have married during the previous fifty years have been disowned for marrying persons not Friends. The heaviest penalty imposable by a Christian Church has been ruthlessly inflicted for the violation of an autocratic rule of Discipline dealing with one of the most sacred acts of human life. ' Rich indeed must be that Church which can spare such members for such a cause.' With keen irony, the essayist declares that while Friends have had such

an active part in reforming the criminal code of the nation, it is a pity that they did not see their way to reform their own criminal code!" [1]

The loss caused by this policy was almost irreparable. Persistence in it must have resulted in practical extinction.

There still remains, however, the deeper question whether the appeal of the Quaker evangelists was not limited by the essential nature of their message, or at least by the form in which they presented it. The authors of this history attribute the comparative failure of the movement to a defective formulation of its doctrine. Seventeenth-century Quakerism produced or discovered one theologian, a Scotsman named Robert Barclay. In his famous Apology, which became the standard intellectual statement of Quakerism for two centuries, he defines the Quaker position by contrast and agreement with Calvinism as interpreted by the Westminster Assembly of Divines. His work might almost be described as an attempt to find room for the message of George Fox within the framework of the theology of John Calvin. Barclay accepts the doctrine of the Fall almost unreservedly, though he cannot believe in the damnation of infants. Starting out from the total depravity of ordinary human nature, he regards the inner light as essentially supernatural. He distinguishes it from reason on the one side and from conscience on the other. It is a miraculous illumination granted to men from time to time, and warranting itself by a kind of self-evidencing power, so that men are as sure of the truth of its messages as they are of the laws of thought. If men recognize the season of

[1] *Later Periods of Quakerism*, p. 949.

their visitation and obey the light, it leads on to salvation. It is best discerned in quietness. "Be still, and know that I am God." This saving light is given to all men, and is a gift won for mankind by the life and death of Jesus Christ.

Such is Barclay's theology in outline, and from this account of the inner light he could deduce and defend the main Quaker positions: their form of worship on a basis of silence; their open ministry, for which all were responsible, and in which all might share; their independence of the sacraments or of any outward rite; their form of Church organization and discipline; their insistence on the inwardness of salvation and its realization in daily response to divine guidance. But in the judgment of our authors, this formulation of the Quaker doctrine was defective, and even disastrous. It makes a clean cut between the outward and the inward, the natural and the supernatural, the human and the divine, which raises insoluble problems both for psychology and philosophy. The actual association of the Quaker message with the thought-forms of Calvinistic orthodoxy proved dangerous when that orthodoxy crumbled away in the nineteenth century, while the concordat between Fox and Calvin which Barclay established did not satisfy the Quakers who came under the influence of the Evangelical revival. Like Barclay, these Evangelical Quakers accepted the doctrines of the Fall and of human depravity, but they were not content with his view of the Scriptures as a secondary authority in religion, nor were they satisfied with his account of the meaning and effects of the death of Christ. While, then, Barclay was building on Calvinism, his theology did not go far enough to satisfy

the Evangelicals, and went too far to escape the assaults of modern criticism. On the other hand, his formulation of the doctrine of the inner light opened the door to Quietism both for good and for evil, encouraged a distrust of higher education, and tended towards a doctrine of Election which differed little from Calvin's. The inner light itself was set forth in a forbidding or repellent form.

These limitations of Barclay's theology are well illustrated by the great separation which unhappily split the Society of Friends in America in 1827–8. Both sides in the controversy could and did appeal to Barclay: neither really stood within the lines he had drawn. On the one side were the Evangelical Friends proclaiming the necessity of belief in the inerrancy of Scripture and the Atonement effected by Christ's death. They could fairly point to the element of orthodox doctrine in Barclay, particularly to his view of the Fall. But the inner light did not really mean to these Evangelical Friends what it meant to Barclay. On the other side stood Elias Hicks and his followers proclaiming the all-sufficiency of trust in the inner light as the way of salvation. Unlike Barclay, Hicks repudiated the Fall and along with it the orthodox views of Scripture and the Atonement. Like Barclay, he regarded the inner light as essentially supernatural. He was intensely Quietist; he distrusted all outward helps and ordinary knowledge; he leaned to a doctrine of Election. Dr. Rufus Jones describes the position of Elias Hicks in the following terms:—

"We soon discover that this 'Light' or 'emanation of God' in man is not an elemental possession of human nature, but that man is a being of double

compartments. The Light is a 'gift' superadded to mere man, so that we still have here, as in so many other theologies, a dualistic world. Reason is barren and sterile until it is assisted by the Light. . . . The mind is one reality or entity, and the Light is another.

"This dualistic view made Elias Hicks quite naturally set a very slight value on education or on any kind of human contrivances for the advancement of moral and spiritual causes. The following conclusions flow out legitimately from his fundamental idea: . . . 'A great deal of learning is rather a hindrance than a help' (Q. i. 226). 'All these human sciences are mere nonsense. They have not part nor lot in finding out the will and mind of God, which we cannot know till we know Him' (Q. i. 226). . . . He vigorously disapproved of Bible societies, even of agricultural societies, and in fact of any institutions that exist solely for the purpose of enlarging man's natural powers and skill in temporal matters (J. 383, Q. iv. 131). Even colleges and academies are a doubtful blessing, since 'they take away the mind from its right director' (Q. i. 230). We can learn more from this inward teaching than we can from 'all the books and men on the face of the earth' (J. 238)." [1]

This criticism of Elias Hicks is, in effect, a criticism of Barclay and the traditional theology of Quakerism. It was too rigidly dualistic. It gave no satisfying account either of the relation of the life of the soul to outside nature or of the relation of the religious experience of the present to the religious experience of the past. It discounted nature, and it discounted history. We shall not be surprised, therefore, if to

[1] *Later Periods of Quakerism*, pp. 446, 447.

many Quakerism proved unattractive because it seemed to ignore essential spiritual values.

It must further be admitted that men are reluctant to recognize in themselves a supernatural presence, partly from a reverent modesty and partly from a fear of self-surrender. We may see the first reflected in a passage from the letters of Charles Lamb. "Tell Lloyd," he writes to Coleridge in 1797, "I have had thoughts of turning Quaker, and have been reading, or am rather just beginning to read, a most capital book, good thoughts in good language, William Penn's *No Cross, No Crown*. I like it immensely. Unluckily, I went to one of his meetings, tell him, in St. John Street, yesterday, and saw a man under all the agitation and workings of a fanatic who believed himself under the influence of some 'inevitable presence.' This cured me of Quakerism: I love it in the books of Penn and Woolman, but I detest the vanity of a man thinking he speaks by the Spirit when what he says an ordinary man might say without all the quaking and trembling." If, as Mr. E. V. Lucas suggests, this letter refers to the one occasion on which Lamb in his famous essay tells us he witnessed "a sample of the old Foxian orgasm," he described this specimen of the vocal ministry among Friends with more sympathy in the later essay than in the earlier letter. But the first impression given in the letter did not pass away. The silence rather than the preaching attracted him to the Quakers' meeting. "Speaking by the Spirit" seemed to him to savour of vanity. This was the ultimate barrier between Lamb and Quakerism.

It is not only modesty that leads men to withhold assent from the central Quaker doctrine. To believe

in divine guidance involves or seems to involve the loss of self-direction. In his book on the *Religion of the Roman People*, Mr. Warde Fowler has an illuminating chapter on Virgil in which he discusses the dullness of the hero of the Æneid. He suggests that Æneas is voted dull precisely because he is *pius*. His *pietas* suppresses his personality. He is the agent of Jupiter rather than himself. This is, of course, peculiarly exasperating when the responsibility for the desertion of Dido is transferred to the god. But there is behind this verdict on Æneas more than a distaste provoked by a particular incident. There is the sense of something uncanny and forbidding about a life shaped by some external influence. Mr. Warde Fowler rightly says, " So too it is in Jewish history : we feel with Esau more than with Jacob, and with David more than with Moses, who is none the less the grandest typical Israelite in the Old Testament." Men love to choose and see their path : they do not readily seek the kindly Light.

The Friends themselves in the eighteenth century were acutely conscious of the burden of responsibility involved in their central belief. The contrast between George Fox and John Woolman on this point is certainly significant. The pressure of Christ within was revealed to Fox as a liberating and triumphant reality. Fox describes himself as " travelling on a road cast up and well prepared." Woolman, on the other hand, felt himself to the end of his life to be " as a man walking through a miry place, in which are stones here and there safe to step on, but so situated that one step being taken, time is necessary to see where to step next."

This transition from the joyous confidence of the

seventeenth century to the sober caution of the eighteenth century undoubtedly meant a decline in the attractive power of Quakerism. To the leading Quakers in the eighteenth century, obedience to the inner light meant the acceptance of a cross, the denial of even the lawful self, as W. Penn put it. This grave sense of responsibility was no doubt accentuated by the idea of the supernatural which shaped Quaker theology. If the modern Quaker theologian, with the help of psychology and religious philosophy, can break down the crude separation between human and divine, natural and supernatural, which obsesses the mind of the average man, he will be able to present the doctrine of the inner light in a less repellent form than it assumes in traditional Quakerism. A reformulation of the doctrine should make it easier for men 'to see within the common, the divine." But there is a danger in any reinterpretation which completely identifies the witness of the divine in man with the ordinary processes of conscience and reason. Such a reinterpretation could not altogether remove the initial prejudice of the average man without at the same time impairing the dynamic of Quakerism. The essential Quaker testimony will still be "No Cross, No Crown."

We have dwelt at length on the limitations and comparative failure of Quakerism, partly in order to illustrate the candour with which the history of the movement has been written, and partly because alike for the student of history and for the student of religion there are few more baffling problems than that suggested by the lofty ideals and the limited appeal of Quakerism. When we recall the fewness of their numbers, the record of their actual influence

and achievement becomes the more remarkable. We have already touched on the important, not to say the decisive, part which the Quakers took in the struggle for religious liberty in this country. We have also noted their contribution to colonization in Pennsylvania. But in almost every department of moral and social progress we find Friends among the pioneers.

In the movement for the abolition of slavery, in prison reform, in securing justice for backward peoples, in developing the more humane treatment of the insane, in the promotion of international arbitration, Friends have led the way. Names like those of John Woolman, Joseph Sturge, J. G. Whittier and William Forster will always be remembered among the protagonists of the Anti-Slavery Crusade. Elizabeth Fry will not be less honoured for her work in changing the conditions of prison life. The labours of Friends in America for the Indians in that country deservedly claim ten pages of Rufus Jones's concluding volume, while the foundation of the Retreat in York by William Tuke marks a turning-point in the medical handling of lunacy. The cause of international arbitration owes much to Quakers like Sir Edward Fry and Joseph Gundry Alexander. The outstanding service of Friends to peace is doubtless John Bright's ever-memorable protest against the Crimean War. From the first Friends led the campaign against the British policy of forcing the sale of opium on China. Joshua Rowntree, in his book *The Imperial Drug Trade*, provided an unanswered exposure of the Royal Commission which reported in 1895, and a Friend, John Edward Ellis, was associated with Lord Morley at the India Office when the policy of a tardy reparation of the wrong to China was initiated.

In enlightening public opinion on social issues, Friends have taken a noteworthy part, as witness such books as *The Temperance Problem and Social Reform*, by Joseph Rowntree and Arthur Sherwell, and Seebohm Rowntree's book on *Poverty*. In initiating new and hopeful experiments for the improvement of industrial and social conditions, Friends bear an honourable record. It is only necessary to mention the contribution of the Cadburys and the Rowntrees to housing and to the better social organization of factories, and the less known but hardly less significant work of Malcolm Sparkes in organizing the Guild in the building trade.

On the side of education, Friends early developed schools. Fox himself had emphasized the importance of a good education for the children of Friends. Of their existing schools, Ackworth dates back to 1779. To the development of national education a Friend, Joseph Lancaster, made a valuable contribution, and the name of Lindley Murray was for two generations a household word, since his English Grammar was in almost every school. Friends' interest in the higher education of adults developed more slowly. But the colleges like Haverford and Swarthmore in the United States are proof of the interest of Friends to-day in University education, while in England the honour of starting the Adult School movement belongs to Joseph Sturge, and the present development of Fircroft and other educational settlements is largely the work of Friends. It is perhaps significant of the genius of Quakerism that it has produced a long list of scientists, including such names as those of John Dalton, Silvanus P. Thompson, Lord Lister and Sir Jonathan Hutchinson. The habit of close attention and the

love of nature have been widely cultivated among Friends.

Beyond any particular services, and beyond any list of distinguished names lies the success of the Society of Friends in maintaining and fostering a particular type of character, quiet, unaggressive and yet determined and self-reliant, with a real reverence for men and a deep loyalty to truth, a character which usually wins respect and often inspires love. The assertion of the spiritual equality of the sexes has given a quiet strength to womanhood which has enabled Quaker women to discharge responsibilities from which most women shrink. It is impossible to read a history like this or to come into close contact with Friends without wishing that there were more of them.

It is perhaps futile to ask whether there is any prospect of a Quaker revival in the present generation. The name of Friend is held in respect throughout Europe on account of the Society's work for the relief of war victims in every stricken land. And it must be increasingly recognized, one would suppose, that there is little hope of reconstruction in Europe except in the spirit in which Friends try to live. Some conditions favourable to Quaker Evangelism certainly exist. Whether the Quaker Evangelists exist is a question that only time can answer. But if a new generation of prophets should arise in the Society, they will certainly draw inspiration and guidance from this splendid history.

PERSONAL RELIGION AND SOCIAL PROGRESS

THE 200th anniversary of the birth of John Woolman which falls in the present month [1] cannot be allowed to pass without some further tribute to the man and his work. Yet to handle the theme worthily is no easy task. There is little to add to the appreciations which we already possess from the pens of J. G. Whittier, Dora Greenwell and G. M. Trevelyan. And apart from the difficulty of following the lead of such writers, John Woolman himself makes us uncomfortably aware of the emptiness of words. No man lends himself less to the orator or the essayist. It is not possible to write worthily or read profitably about John Woolman unless one is prepared for self-examination and self-abasement. Consequently it is difficult to commemorate this Quaker-Saint. A further difficulty lies in the very simplicity and transparent clearness of Woolman's life and writings. In this, as in much else, he was singularly Christlike. He was like Christ inasmuch as the directness of his teaching is more easily obscured than enforced by commentary, and the simplicity of his character more often lost than preserved by analysis. Yet no one who has once come under the spell of the Journal would refuse the privilege of saying something in its praise, however inadequate.

[1] October 1920.—This pamphlet is reprinted by kind permission of *The Friend*.

And it is altogether fitting that men's attention should be recalled to John Woolman at the present time, since the recovery of Europe from its present disasters depends very largely on whether or no we have men and women as responsive to the pressure of Christ's spirit as John Woolman was.

In his charming and suggestive essay, Mr. Trevelyan associates John Woolman's Journal with the Confessions of St. Augustine and Jean Jacques Rousseau. He regards these books as the three greatest religious autobiographies in the world's literature. He further points out that of the three men, John Woolman exerted not perhaps the most powerful but certainly the purest influence. I should not like to say that no one has ever been misled or ever will be misled in detail by Woolman's writings, but there is surprisingly little dross in his work. He was, moreover, a prophet who disarmed criticism by humility. He won a hearing for unwelcome truths through sheer goodness of heart. Happily, he met with a large measure of response among Friends in his own day, so that in praising him now we are not engaged in building the sepulchre of a prophet whom our fathers stoned. It is true that what seemed his over-scrupulousness sometimes occasioned a shyness among Friends towards him. On his first appearance in London Yearly Meeting, dressed in undyed garments, he met with a cold and dubious reception. But he soon found his way to the hearts of those who listened to him and who talked with him. When he fell asleep in York in October 1772, he was mourned by those who had not known him long, but who had come to love him much.

It was only under the stress of the Beacon controversy in 1835 that John Woolman's writings along with other

Quaker classics fell under suspicion in some quarters among English Friends. Some orthodox Evangelicals criticized the Journal and the associated tracts because "faith in Christ crucified as the ground of man's hope of salvation is not prominently set forth in them." There is something pathetic in this criticism, for it evidences the extraordinary difficulty which many had and still have in recognizing the true character of a religious experience unless it be clothed in a form of sound words with which they are familiar. It is true that the doctrinal formulæ of Evangelical orthodoxy do not figure prominently in Woolman's Journal, but the singular moral beauty of the man might surely have revealed the influence of Christ crucified to the Evangelical believer. If Woolman made little use of Evangelical phrases, he certainly lived in a true Evangelical experience. Admittedly this experience is hard to define, but at the heart of it is a sense of our utter dependence on the forgiving and sustaining love of God. John Woolman would have said with James Nayler that "he lived in that spirit whose ground and spring is the mercies and forgiveness of God." He would have joined with Robert Robinson in singing,

> Oh, to grace how great a debtor
> Daily I'm constrained to be.

He would have appreciated Anthony Benezet's choice of an epitaph for himself: "Anthony Benezet was a poor creature, and by Divine favour was enabled to know it." If this attitude of mind constitutes the core of a good Evangelical experience, then John Woolman was a thoroughly Evangelical saint.

This claim is confirmed by his account of his early religious experience. His conversion in some ways

resembles the conversion of John Bunyan rather than that of George Fox. There is in the Journal the same tendency to exaggerate youthful waywardness, the same kind of self-depreciation that you find in *Grace Abounding*. Woolman is conscious of what he called wantonness, of lack of earnestness, of backsliding and need of repentance. He knew the meaning of a contrite heart, he knew the joy of forgiveness, and the way in which he touches on these things comes more closely into line with the Puritan and Evangelical experience than with the primitive Quaker experience.

That there should be some difference in emphasis between George Fox and John Woolman is not, after all, surprising. Fox reached the truth of Divine Guidance after a prolonged inner conflict. The presence of Christ within was revealed to him as a liberating and triumphant reality. John Woolman, on the other hand, was brought up in a settled religious society where the doctrine of the Inner Light was an established tradition—a tradition often loosely held. The central truth of Quakerism had for him the measure of unreality which always attaches to familiar traditions half-heartedly accepted. As a young man Woolman found the walk with God which Fox discovered with such joy, a cross to which he had to submit, a truth to which his mind and will needed to be reconciled. Perhaps he would only have discovered the reality of communion with God by becoming aware that he shrank from it and that he had once and again departed from it. Then, too, he discovered God to be a pardoning God, a God who waits to be gracious. In the very form of his religious experience he was united with Evangelical Christians of all Churches and of none. He stands in the great Evangelical tradition. He was aware of

his kinship with Thomas à Kempis and John Huss. He was free to unite, as way opened, in work and worship with Presbyterian and Moravian. It was natural that in his conversion he found " no narrowness respecting sects and opinions," but believed " that sincere upright-hearted people, in every society, who truly love God, were accepted of Him."

Part of the abiding charm of the Journal lies in the Evangelical humility of the man it reveals. Among the most moving things in the Journal are confessions of failure—such venial failures as they seem to us, and yet most painful failures as they seemed to him. One instance must suffice. The subject of participation in lotteries came up for consideration at a Yearly Meeting in Newport. It was an issue on which Woolman felt strongly and he spoke strongly. " In the heat of zeal, I made reply to what an ancient Friend said, and when I sat down I saw that my words were not enough seasoned with charity. After this, I spoke no more on the subject. At length a minute was made, a copy of which was to be sent to their several Quarterly Meetings, inciting Friends to labour to discourage the practice amongst all professing with us. Some time after this minute was made I remained uneasy with the manner of my speaking to the ancient Friend, and could not see my way clear to conceal my uneasiness though I was concerned that I might say nothing to weaken the cause in which I had laboured. After some close exercise and hearty repentance, for not having attended closely to the safe guide, I stood up, and reciting the passage, acquainted Friends, that though I durst not go from what I had said as to the matter, yet I was uneasy with the manner of my speaking, believing milder language would have been better.

As this was uttered in some degree of creaturely abasement after a warm debate, it appeared to have a good savour amongst us." So far as I remember there is nothing like this in the Journal of George Fox. If Fox ever ran beyond his guide and said more than he ought to have said, he has not placed the occasion upon record. And perhaps it is just because Woolman does not conceal his failures that in some ways he speaks more nearly home to our condition and calls forth deeper love than George Fox. Certainly Woolman's autobiography is a wonderful commentary on the text " Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God that worketh in you." In his hymn, " Be Thy word with power fraught," Lynch describes one type of Christian in these lines :—

> Some, like stars in clearing skies,
> Trembling be, but very bright.

John Woolman was a trembling though not a falling star, and his shining is all the brighter because he was not ashamed to acknowledge his trembling.

It is important to recognize that Woolman's service to humanity was rooted and grounded in his personal religion. It would not be unjust to say that his first concern was for his own soul, his first anxiety to be right with God. And by his personal surrender to God he found himself united with and committed to a universal love that embraced not only mankind but also the brute creation. The first effect of his conversion was to make him seek for inward retirement, and it was in and through his personal communion with God that his love for his fellows grew. The first manifestation of this universal love in John Woolman was a concern that young men of his own age might be

redeemed from a careless and wanton life. He himself is changed and desires the conversion of others. And from this intense desire to be right with God by understanding and obeying Him, Woolman was led on into service for the slaves and for all who were oppressed.[1]

I venture to stress the connection between Woolman's personal religion and his social service, because it is often supposed that concern for one's own soul is something selfish and morbid, opposed to a healthy concern for social life and progress, and also because we are often inclined and content to draw our inspiration for social service and reform from some lower source than communion with God. Both these tendencies require examination. With regard to the first, admittedly some conceptions of conversion are so limited that they foster an anxiety about one's own salvation which may be narrowly selfish and from which Christ came to redeem us. But to be concerned to know God and to be stirred by the question, What shall I do to inherit eternal life ? is neither selfish nor morbid.

[1] For the character and effects of his conversion compare this passage from the Journal : " As I lived under the cross, and simply followed the openings of truth, my mind, from day to day, was more enlightened ; my former acquaintances were left to judge of me as they would, for I found it safest for me to live in private, and keep these things sealed up in my own breast. While I silently ponder on that change wrought in me, I find no language equal to convey to another a clear idea of it. I looked upon the works of God in this visible creation, and an awfulness covered me. My heart was tender and often contrite, and universal love to my fellow-creatures increased in me. This will be understood by such as have trodden in the same path. Some glances of real beauty may be seen in their faces, who dwell in true meekness. There is a harmony in the sound of that voice to which divine love gives utterance, and some appearance of right order in their temper and conduct, whose passions are regulated ; yet these do not fully show forth that inward life to those who have not felt it : this white stone and new name is only known rightly by such as receive it."

It is rather to claim man's birthright. As Edward Dowden puts it in an essay on John Bunyan, "For one who believes in a life eternal, other-worldliness pursued vigorously on his own behalf and that of his fellows is a virtue; it is at once the highest prudence and the noblest charity. Whoever—was it Charles Kingsley?—spoke scornfully of the anxiety to save one's own dirty soul, indulged in an idle flourish of rhetoric." We shall not deepen our respect for our fellows, nor increase our power to help them, by ignoring the worth of our own souls or by neglecting the possibilities of our own personal communion with God. It ought not to strike us as quaint that John Woolman's chief objection to the consumption of spirituous liquors was that it hindered communion with God. We should be in happier case to-day if in all social questions such a consideration was paramount with us. If we were more earnest and sincere in our personal religion, we should be more effective in our social service.

This leads on to the consideration of the second tendency, the tendency to rely on something less than religion for the mainspring of social advance. Perhaps progressive movements are held up just because we trust so much more to common sense than to religion, because we wait for the pressure of circumstances instead of seeking God's guidance, and because even when we appeal to moral principles our moral insight has not the intensity which can come only from such a deep personal religious faith as John Woolman possessed. Consider for a moment the present international situation, and must we not confess that the weight of our difficulties is increased incalculably by our poverty towards God? We know that there is no hope for the world apart from a new spirit in

international relations, and yet we seem utterly unable to realize that new spirit effectively. If we had the passion and purity of John Woolman, the conscience of the nation might soon be so roused as to end the present shameful situation. But it would require John Woolman's religious faith. It would only come through realizing that

> The wrong of man to man, on [Christ]
> Inflicts a deeper wrong.

It would only come through the sense of the sinfulness of sin which communion with universal love involves.

If, however, our moral enthusiasms run low through lack of a deep personal religion, it is also true that the Evangelical Movement itself came to a halt mainly because few followed Woolman in his understanding of its social implications. Woolman's sensitiveness about oppression was the necessary outcome of his apprehension of God's love, and this sensitiveness should have been reproduced in all who shared his awareness of God's care for all His works and who held with him the doctrine of Christ suffering for and in man. Now the Evangelical Movement followed Woolman up to a point. It contributed very effectively in this country to carry his crusade against slavery to a successful conclusion. Beyond that, his sensitiveness towards all forms of oppression was not eagerly embraced. There were one or two notable exceptions —Lord Shaftesbury, for example. But, generally speaking, Evangelical Christianity in England did not follow this line of development. In fact, the Evangelical Churches seem gradually to have lost a large measure of their original blessing, probably for two main reasons. The movement failed partly through

want of courage in facing and accepting new truth. It lost its intellectual grip through identifying itself with untenable views of the Bible. But an even more serious failure was ethical. It tended to become content with philanthropy and ceased to be vitally interested in social justice. The representatives of the original movement were hardly identified with any social crusade, except Temperance. One main lesson of John Woolman's life is this, that no Church can effectively stand for the things of Christ in the world unless it be inspired with a passion for social justice.

A passion for social justice! Have not even the Bolsheviks the same? In what, then, does the Christian enthusiasm differ from that of the Bolshevik? No doubt there will be divergence in programme and aim, but the profoundest difference will lie in method. The Christian must seek the fulfilment of his aims in another spirit, and in this essential John Woolman was unique. He was the living embodiment of the Christian way of advancing social justice. The story of his crusade among Friends to liberate their slaves reads almost as a moral miracle. It is the kind of thing which the man of the world does not believe would ever take place, since reliance on personal persuasion is little to the liking of our impatient natures. You wonder as you read of Woolman's labours. The patience and persistence, the modesty that never thrust himself forward, the courage that never turned back from any personal encounter however difficult, the lowliness of mind with which he opened his misgivings to older men, the scrupulous care with which he limited his own complicity with existing forms of oppression while not judging others, the firmness with which he resisted any weakening of his testimony

through social pressure and desire to please—all these things make a deep and unforgettable impression as one reads the narrative of his activities.

The qualities revealed in his actions reappear in his writings. When you remember how deeply he felt, his tract *Considerations on the Keeping of Negroes* is a marvel of restraint. There is no abuse, no denunciation, no over-statement. And he never ceases to try to identify himself with those to whom he appeals as well as with those for whom he appeals. Part of the secret of his power is given in such sentences as these: "I often saw the necessity of keeping down to that root from whence our concern proceeded; and have cause, in reverent thankfulness, humbly to bow down before the Lord, who was near to me, and preserved my mind in calmness under some sharp conflicts, and begat a spirit of sympathy and tenderness in me, towards some who were grievously entangled by the spirit of this world." "If those who were at times under sufferings on account of some scruples of conscience, kept low and humble, and in their conduct in life manifested a spirit of true charity, it would be more likely to reach the witness in others, and be of more service in the Church, than if their sufferings were attended with a contrary spirit and conduct." There was in John Woolman that union of moderation and intensity which all need and few achieve. Those who laugh at the idea of reform by persuasion do not know what John Woolman did. Only men and women who possess in some measure Woolman's secret of Christian persuasiveness can achieve the results which others will continue to seek and seek in vain by violent methods.

Concerning John Woolman we must ask one further

question. Do his judgment and insight correspond with his faith and with his grace of persuasion? It is possible for a man to be pervaded with the love of God, to be exceedingly lovable and loving, and yet to lack wisdom, to err in practical judgment and so fail to preserve a true balance. Has Woolman significance for us not only in pointing us to the true centre and as showing us the temper in which a Christian should seek to live, but also as a guide to the moral labyrinth which we call the social problem? Had he the main lines of a sound analysis of the nature of oppression in the world and of our responsibility for it? In the new *History of American Literature* which forms a companion to the *Cambridge History of English Literature*, Woolman is dealt with in a chapter devoted to Philosophers and Divines. Is that a correct classification? Had Woolman an insight which might be called genuinely practical because truly philosophical?

We may at once admit that Woolman entertained some scruples such as that about the use of undyed cloth, which seem extravagant. In such matters we shall hesitate to judge him, but we shall feel no obligation to follow him. These things, at any rate, have not been laid on us as they were laid on him. If his moral scruples were a series of such individual eccentricities, we should find but little guidance in him. But the main lines of his concern to labour for a perfect redemption from the spirit of oppression are far deeper and truer than any such particular testimonies. He saw very deep into the significance of our social divisions, and there is a wisdom, especially in his *Word of Remembrance to the Rich*, which we certainly have not yet exhausted.

At first sight, the value of his teaching might seem

to be impaired by the fact that he did not live to see the rise of modern industry. Certainly the complexity and interdependence of our industrial organization makes the question of personal complicity almost insoluble for the individual. It was easier for John Woolman to keep himself unspotted from the world and to reduce his business undertakings when he found they filled his mind with useless cumbers, than it would be for any who seek to follow him to-day. And yet the comparative simplicity of the conditions with which he was familiar was in some ways an advantage. We are obsessed with the idea that the evils from which society suffers are bound up with capitalism, with large-scale production and the private ownership of capital. These undoubtedly create their special problems, but behind them all is the spirit of oppression which Woolman analysed so clearly in a simpler age. That modern conditions have given this spirit new opportunities is true enough, but its nature is unchanged.

Woolman touches on things that have since assumed a greater importance. He notes, for example, that bargaining between rich and poor is not equal. He perceives that freedom of contract may be illusory. Thus he writes: "*Though the poor occupy our estates by a bargain, to which they, in their poor circumstances, agree;* and we may ask even less than a punctual fulfilling of their agreement; yet if our views are to lay up riches, or to live in conformity to customs which have not their foundation in the truth, and our demands are such as require from them greater toil or application to business than is consistent with pure love, we invade their rights as inhabitants of a world, of which a good and gracious God is the proprietor, and under whom we

are tenants." He will not allow the Christian conscience to shelter itself behind law, whether in regard to contracts or in regard to property. "Thus when house is joined to house, and field laid to field, until there is no place, and the poor are thereby straitened, though this is done by bargain and purchase, yet so far as it stands distinguished from universal love, so far that woe predicted by the prophet will accompany their proceedings. As He who first founded the earth was then the true proprietor of it, so He still remains, and though He hath given it to the children of men, so that multitudes of people have had their sustenance from it, while they continued here; yet He hath never alienated it, but His right is as good as at first; nor can any apply the increase of their possessions contrary to universal love, nor dispose of lands in a way which they know tends to exalt some, by oppressing others, without being justly chargeable with usurpation." Legally enforceable contracts and established rights of property may be oppressive.

In these passages we may trace the characteristic principle of Woolman. He is concerned less with the direction of industry than with the use of wealth, and he is persuaded that industrial oppression is closely associated with luxurious expenditure. The standards of living of the upper classes are the source of hardship and poverty, in Woolman's judgment. "Every degree of luxury hath some connection with evil." "In visiting people of note in the Society who had slaves and labouring with them in brotherly love on that account, I have seen, and the sight has affected me, that a conformity to some customs distinguishable from pure wisdom has entangled many: and *that the desire of gain to support these*

customs has greatly opposed the work of truth." There is more truth, I venture to think, in such insistence on the connection of customary standards of living with social evils than in some other things which bulk more largely in the thought of ardent social reformers to-day. Standards of living react subtly but constantly on the conduct of those who now finance and control industry, and determine in no small measure their reluctance to change. And we need to weigh with great care all that Woolman says of the ways in which our manner of life may lead us to condone oppression.

Another very important consideration to which Woolman repeatedly returns is the need of direct contact with the conditions under which others have to live. He was persuaded that those who were well-to-do were content with the social system because they were not aware how it pressed upon others. Woolman himself was constantly endeavouring to share the experiences of others. He undertook labours for which his frame was not suited so that he might know what the pressure of exacting toil was. He denied himself that he might enter into other men's experiences. When coming to England, he travelled steerage, to share the lot of the sailor. When he arrived here, he walked rather than go by coach, since he thought the postilions were overworked. He thus got an insight into social conditions in this country which he could not have got from the top of a coach. So in advising others to enter into the lives of their fellows, he was only preaching what he practised. How essential this social sympathy is can be easily recognized, since all are aware of the vivifying effect of direct contacts. Hardness of judgment is often

bound up with the sheltered life. Inequalities of wealth and divergent standards of living prevent social understanding, and perpetuate injustice.

In yet another direction, the value of Woolman's insight is apparent. He clearly perceived the connection between social wrong and public calamity. He saw how closely war is bound up with the pursuit of wealth. He anticipated the disaster which actually came upon the United States through the retention of slavery. The confidence of his anticipations rested on his faith in the justice of God, as the following quotations will show: "I was troubled to perceive the darkness of their imaginations; and in some pressure of spirit said, the love of ease and gain are the motives in general of keeping slaves, and men are wont to take hold of weak arguments to support a cause which is unreasonable. I have no interest on either side, save only the interest which I desire to have in the truth. I believe liberty is their right, and as I see they are not only deprived of it, but treated in other respects with inhumanity in many places, I believe He, who is a refuge for the oppressed, will, in His own time, plead their cause; and happy will it be for such as walk in uprightness before Him." "Finding an engagement to speak, I said, 'My mind is often led to consider the purity of the divine Being, and the justice of His judgments; and herein my soul is covered with awfulness. I cannot omit to hint of some cases, where people have not been treated with the purity of justice, and the event hath been lamentable. Many slaves on this continent are oppressed, and their cries have reached the ears of the Most High. Such are the purity and certainty of His judgments, that He cannot be partial in our favour. In infinite love and goodness,

He hath opened our understandings from one time to another, concerning our duty towards this people; and it is not a time for delay. Should we now be sensible of what He requires of us, and through a respect to the private interest of some persons, or through a regard to some friendships which do not stand on an immutable foundation, neglect to do our duty in firmness and constancy, still waiting for some extraordinary means to bring about their deliverance, God may by terrible things in righteousness answer us in this matter.' " There is, in these passages, the same philosophy of history which is to be found in Lincoln's Second Inaugural. Woolman's conception of universal love involved justice for all who are oppressed. He had, moreover, a clear understanding of the way in which evils grow and come to a head. Oppression is cumulative, and of gradual growth. Its growth owes much to men's acquiescence in evil. He perceived how often feelings that are natural and right, such as family affection, contribute to make men tolerate and support customs of whose righteousness they are not sure. The sluggishness and inaction of men of goodwill often account for public disaster.

In all this there is a wisdom that grows not old, and Woolman's exhortations may well serve to deepen our own sense of responsibility at the present time. It would be easy to find many passages that would serve this purpose. Perhaps two final quotations may be permitted: " And here luxury and covetousness, with the numerous oppressions, and other evils attending them, appeared very afflicting to me; and I felt in that which is immutable, that the seeds of great calamity and desolation are sown and growing fast on this continent. Nor have I words sufficient

to set forth the longing I then felt, that we, who are placed along the coast, and have tasted the love and goodness of God, might arise in the strength thereof; and like faithful messengers, labour to check the growth of these seeds, that they may not ripen to the ruin of our posterity." "May the deep sufferings of our Saviour be so dear to us, that we may never trample under foot the adorable Son of God, nor count the blood of the covenant unholy. May the faithfulness of the martyrs, when the prospect of death by fire was before them, and the patient constant sufferings of the upright-hearted servants of God, in later ages, be revived in our minds; and may we so follow on to know the Lord that neither the faithful in this age nor those in ages to come may ever be brought under suffering, through our sliding back from the work of reformation in the world."

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